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ABSTRACT

Workshops and presentations in this volume are as follows: "Learning the Language of Learning" (Firestone); "Self-Study Examination Program of Higher Education for Adults in China" (Wang, Smith); "Using the Principles and Process of Adult Learning to Develop an Award Level Program for the Education of Adult Educators: An Australian Case Study" (Morris); "The Adult Learner and Fear: A Critical Combination in Academic Advising" (Didelot); "The Use of Peer Support/Study Groups for Registered Nurses in a Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program" (Stone); "Shift Happens: Non-Traditional Education and Women's Adult Development" (Taylor); "Factors in Adult Students Not Persisting in a Non-Traditional Undergraduate Program" (Ganiere et al.); "'And Gladly Would (S)he Learn, and Gladly Teach': Ideal Faculty for Adult Learners" (Dumbleton); "Reflections on Teaching and Advising Adults" (Bunnell); "A Study of Student Perception of the Importance of ADP (Adult Degree Program) Advising Tasks and Faculty Performance" (Gillett, Duncan); "The Rossman Adult Learning Inventory: Creating Awareness of Adult Development" (Rossman, Rossman); "Evaluating Program Quality and Effectiveness: A Case of Marian College" (Owolabi); "Dialogue on Diversity: The Person and the Institution," (Alicea, Shallenberger); "Experiential Learning, Reflections on Practice and the Organizational Action Scientist" (Brown, Elfenbein); "Applying the Principles of Adult Learning in the Management of an Administrative Staff" (Dix); "Teaching Inquiry as a Lifelong Learning Skill" (Rury, Walden); "Critical Perspectives: Teaching Great Books and Religious Studies to Adults" (McEntyre); "In Search of a Context for Our Work: Understanding the Life History Method and Its Place in the Social Science Research Tradition" (Carlson); "Researching Practice and Practicing Research: A Critique of Distance Education Research and Writing" (Beaudoin); "The Student as Integrator in Interdisciplinary Studies" (Salner); "Team Teaching and Interdisciplinary Courses" (Gesiakowska, Lo Sardo); "The Logic of Decisions: Adult Learners and Third World Students" (Wein); and "Educational Planning at Empire State College: Faculty Expectations vs Student Aspirations" (DuBois, Lawrence). (NLA)

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Eleventh National Conference on Alternative and External Degree Programs for Adults

Reflecting on Practice in Adult Higher Education

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Table of Contents

Foreword ... i

Program Planning Committee ... ii

Workshops

Learning the Language of Learning: Using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator to Understand Ourselves and Our Students
Beverly Firestone ... 1

Self-Study Examination Program of Higher Education for Adults in China
Hongxiang Wang and Sue Smith ... 28

Using the Principles and Process of Adult Learning to Develop An Award Level Program for the Education of Adult Educators: An Australian Case Study
Roger Morris ... 39

Track A: Understanding Adult Learners

The Adult Learner and Fear: A Critical Combination in Academic Advising
Mary J. Didelot ... 58

The Use of Peer Support/Study Groups for Registered Nurses (RNs) in a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Program
J. Marian Stone ... 76

Shift Happens: Non-traditional Education and Women's Adult Development
Kathleen Taylor ... 86

Factors In Adult Students Not Persisting in a Non-traditional Undergraduate Program
Diane Ganiere, Judy DeBush, Eva Talbert ... 108

Track B: Faculty Development/Faculty Roles

'And Gladly Would (S)he Learn, and Gladly Teach': Ideal Faculty for Adult Learners
Susanne Dumbleton ... 121

Reflection on Teaching and Advising Adult Students
Ed Bunnell ... 132

A Study of Student Perception of the Importance of ADP Advising Tasks and Faculty Performance
Nancy Gillett and Joyce Duncan ... 140

The Rossman Adult Learning Inventory: Creating Awareness of Adult Development
Maxine E. Rossman and Mark H. Rossman ... 151

Track C: Program Effectiveness

Evaluating Program Quality and Effectiveness: A Case of Marian College
Isaac B. Owolabi ... 155

Dialogue On Diversity: The Person and The Institution
Marisa Alicea and David Shallenberger 171

Experiential Learning, Reflections on Practice and
The Organizational Action Scientist
Stephen M. Brown and Morton H. Elfenbein 173

Applying The Principles of Adult Learning In The Management
of An Administrative Staff
Mary Jane Dix 202

Track D: Expanding Our Approaches to Inquiry

Teaching Inquiry As A Lifelong Skill
John Rury and Phyllis Walden 221

Critical Perspectives: Teaching Great Books and Religious Studies to Adults
John McEntyre 225

In Search of A Context For Our Work: Understanding the Life History Method
and Its Place In the Social Science Research Tradition
Mary S. Carlson 253

Researching Practice and Practicing Research: A Critique of Distance
Education Research and Writing
Michael F. Beaudoin 272

Track E: Teaching and Advising

The Student As Integrator In Interdisciplinary Study
Marcia Salner 284

Team Teaching and Interdisciplinary Courses
Jo Ann Gesiakowska and Betta Lo Sardo 301

The Logic of Decisions: Adult Learners and Third World Students
Sheldon Wein 314

Educational Planning At Empire State College: Faculty Expectations vs.
Student Aspirations
David Du Bois and Betty Hurley Lawrence 330

Foreward

Welcome to the Eleventh National Conference on Adult and External Degree Program for Adults. The goal of the Alliance and the American Council on Education in offering this conference is to provide you with the opportunity for renewal and learning as well as time to share ideas with colleagues. We trust that your participation in this event will contribute to the enrichment of your programs for adult learners.

The Program Planning Committee believes that the presentations selected for this conference represent some of the best thinking and practices in the field today. They directly address both the conference theme, "Reflecting on Practice in Adult Higher Education," as well as the following critical areas which demand our thoughtful attention:

- Understanding Adult Learners
- Faculty Development/Faculty Roles
- Program Effectiveness
- Expanding Our Approaches to Inquiry
- Teaching and Advising

These presentations, and our shared dialogue prompted by issues they raise, provide a basis for enhancing programs designed to meet the needs of adult learners.

We see the conference as an important part of an on-going process that seeks to strengthen and enrich our mutual efforts to improve the quality of adult and external degree programs. Your participation and contribution to this process is very much appreciated. We look forward to your participation in next year's ACE/Alliance conference in Evanston.

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Workshops

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LEARNING THE LANGUAGE OF LEARNING: Using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator to Understand Ourselves and Our Students

Introduction

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator is a controlled instrument based on Jungian psychological type. Its theories are especially useful in helping us to understand methods and preferences for gathering and taking in information, ordering and making sense of that information, coming to conclusions and decisions based on that information, and then communicating these choices, ideas, issues, etc. to others. The indicator has high validity and reliability and has been tested, refined and retested for over 25 years.

Adult students enter our learning environments and advising settings bringing with them their experiences and personalities. We bring the same elements to these encounters. Each of us has a way of interpreting and behaving in the world, and the similarities and differences in perception and behavior can facilitate or inhibit learning, communication, trust building, advising, or other necessary interactions between adults.

No instrument or indicator is an exact measure or picture of who we are, but instruments can help us to examine ourselves according to frameworks and theories. The MBTI, Kolb Learning Style Inventory and/or Neuro Linguistic Programming, for example, present frameworks and patterns through which we can observe ourselves and our life experiences in search of understanding and evaluating them. Through these analyzed observations we begin to understand why we have comfort or discomfort with life situations and choices. This new set of "whys" provides valuable information that can be used in creating change in interactions and learning environments.

Education is a process of gathering information, making sense of information, building it into conceptual frameworks, using it to evaluate and analyze alternatives, and dividing concepts into their component parts and details. The MBTI's associated theories about these processes can inform and educate the educator enabling her to create more effective educational processes and environments.

Toward these ends then, the purpose of this paper is to:

1. Introduce the reader to the theories of the MBTI that contribute to a deeper understanding of oneself and adult students;
2. Encourage the reader to reflect on his/her personal preferences and their implications;
3. Present a practice based model for using these insights into oneself and one's experiences with adults toward the improvement of instructional or advising practices and environments.

The MBTI is based on four dichotomous scales:
Introversion----------------Extraversion
Sensing---------------------Intuitive
Thinking--------------------Feeling
Judging---------------------Perceiving

Introversion-----Extraversion I/E

This preference does not refer to the old ideas that we have had about these words where extroverts were "outgoing and social beings" and introverts were "shy, quiet, retiring and withdrawn", although certainly these could be some behaviors that would be true of individuals with these preferences. Actually, this scale refers to the *focus of one's attention or source of energy*.

Ask yourself the following question:

> When I have a problem or am at a crisis point, is it my *first* inclination to *talk* to someone about it or to think about it?

If you enjoy talking to people about the issues or the crisis and then consider what you have heard, you are probably someone with an extraverted preference. If you need to go off by yourself, consider the situation, make some connections inside yourself and then selectively talk to others to add to and test out your ideas, you are probably someone with an introverted preference. *We all do both*, but we tend to gravitate toward the activity of our strongest preference first.

The extravert is actually *energized* by the outside world, its stimuli and its people. Extroverts make connections outside themselves. They can process information as it is occurring in the external world. The extravert, because of her comfort with the outer world, is often perceived as more active or focusing on people and is a good *active experimenter* in Kolb's learning style theory. Because of the energy derived from externals she can handle multiple stimuli without losing focus. She usually prefers talking as a mode of communication.

The introvert is energized by the inside world, its solitude and the inner connections. The introvert needs to take the information in to make connections before bringing it back out. The outer world can interfere with an introvert's thinking and connectedness. She values and requires solitude and time to process. She is more reflective and prefers to consider something deeply before speaking or acting. She enjoys inward "probing" and connectedness. Introverts generally prefer writing as a communication mode.

The following example illustrates the difference in the locus of energy of the two preferences. After a three hour workshop/class for adult students, (at the end of a 12 hour day) the introverted professor, though full of energy and drive during the class, is totally drained as soon as she enters her car. Her one thought is to get home, rest, and take a hot bath in the solitude of home. "Pulling up" the connections in class has tired her, and she needs to re-energize herself through seclusion.

The extraverted professor, energized by the people and discussion, has difficulty unwinding. She can't stop talking about what worked and she would like to go out for a drink, to "process" what happened. She wants to discuss some of the ideas that emerged during the evening. She is so energized by the externals that she needs help to calm down.

A second example illustrates the difference in toleration of external stimuli. Introverts often prefer to avoid situations like crowded, bright grocery stores at the end of a day. If they need to purchase something, they would prefer to go to a much more expensive small convenience store than to battle a 24 hour major market. The stimuli are much more controlled in a small store, and the external stimuli raise the anxiety level of a tired introvert. This is a difficult phenomenon for the extravert to understand.

The third example illustrates the "bringing up" of ideas or connections. It is evident in a meeting or classroom discussion. The extroverts will contribute readily, sometimes forming ideas as they speak. They tend to dominate the discussion, and enjoy "jumping in" on each other's ideas. One technique for equalizing this situation is the "two-minute time-out". In the midst of a discussion, decision-making meeting or when all points of view are essential, members of the group are asked to write down several ideas related to the present discussion. This puts the introverts on equal footing as they will have "pulled up" the idea and can direct their energy to talking rather than thinking.

One can also distinguish between the extroverts and the introverts by observing the verbal behaviors of others. If you listen to a recording of two extroverts speaking, the ends and beginnings of the sentences will overlap. One extravert will not necessarily wait for the other to finish before he begins speaking. If you listen to an extravert and introvert speaking together, the introvert will wait until the extravert is done before proceeding (if he gets the change), and the extravert will often cut off the introvert in the middle of a thought or idea that is not being expressed quickly enough for the extravert's liking. The extravert also tries to "help" the introvert by completing his sentences or giving him words during the pause that the introvert is using to carefully form and share the thought.

Extraverts often assume that introverts are "slow" because they do not speak with the rapidity of the extravert. The introvert is not having difficulty finding the words, but is rather bringing the idea "out of himself" when you are hearing it. That requires an energy that is being transferred from the inner to the outer world. It is important to wait and permit the introvert the time and reverence to share these thoughts. Introverts are not slower or less intelligent than extroverts.

Sensing----Intuitive S/N

Now that we have discussed the source or locus of energy, we will consider the ways in which we prefer to "take in" information. The second scale on the MBTI has to do with information acquisition.

The sensing person uses the five senses to acquire information. Don't we all? Yes, but the sensing person is acutely aware of the sensory information. He pays close attention to detail and is concerned with the here and now more than the future.

The intuitive person, on the other hand, gathers information in patterns and concepts rather than specifics and details. He takes in a general concept first and adds details later, while the sensing person builds details into a concept. The intuitive looks for patterns, meanings and relationships that go beyond sensory information. He likes to absorb constructs and then plug in details as needed. He can tolerate ambiguity because he has confidence that he will eventually find a construct that will make relational sense of acquired information. He values inspiration and imagination and trusts the unknown.

The sensing person is more uncomfortable with the unknown and prefers to see a direct path from where he is to where he needs to go. Sensing people like to take in little pieces of information and build them into something--often in a linear fashion.

Sensing and Intuition are considered perceiving functions because they are both processes of "seeking the world". Sensors are important because they keep us in touch with reality. The tend to physical and practical detail. They see little things in everyday life, and they let their eyes tell their mind what is there. Intuitives are important because they see possibilities. They are able to comfortably dream or project into the future. They see big pictures and numerous alternatives to any given issues.

Sensing people are the concrete experiences oriented individuals in Kolb's learning style categories, while intuitive people are more likely to enjoy abstract conceptualization.

One example of this difference in perception was evident in a workshop help by the Association for Psychological Type. Participants were given the assignment to "write about a rabbit". Then the group was divided into sensors and intuitives and asked to read their essays.

The sensors wrote various versions of the following:

> "A rabbit is a small, furry animal. It is generally white or brown, and moves with a springing motion generated by strong back feet. The rabbit has very long ears and a wiggly nose..."

Some of the sensors commented "I couldn't think of a rabbit to write about", or "my daughter had a rabbit once and that was the only one I could think of so I wrote about it."

In contrast, no two intuitive essays bore any relationship to another. The following excerpt of one essay is characteristic of intuitive perception:

> "I remember an Easter when I was 9. I awoke early and looked about the room in the dim morning light. I could hear mother downstairs, hiding the eggs as she did each year, in preparation for the family hunt. Any my basket was next to my bed--full of chocolate---just as it had been every year before. But this year was different. This year was sad. This year was pivotal in my journey to adulthood----for this year I no longer believed. I knew the Easter Bunny was a sham."

The sensing people found it hard to imagine how the intuitives could have generated that story given the assignment to write about a rabbit. But for an intuitive, writing about a rabbit did not have to be a sensory or detailed description of the "species rabbit", but rather a story related to the "concept rabbit".

A second example emerged out of a consulting engagement to a computer and design support team of a major corporation. A consultant was called in to run a team building workshop for a group that was "losing productivity" and seemed to be having difficulty working together. The MBTI was used as one of the pre-workshop tools for determining preferences of team members. The consultant hoped to gain information that would help her to explain some of the communication breakdowns through the natural preferences of the team members.

The team was comprised of computer engineers who were largely sensing people. They were detail oriented and deadline driven. One member of the team was an intuitive. This member was the newest member and the team was responsible for training her and integrating her into the major projects. Several members of the team assumed that she was incompetent and incapable of learning what was needed for the job because (in their words) "even the tiniest task was difficult for her, so how can we give her more responsibility?"

She was frustrated because she had "no idea how I fit or what I'm doing." The little tasks were frustrating because she was not being shown the "big picture" into which the tasks fit. She had a need for context to be able to perform detail. They wouldn't expand her scope until she proved herself through the detail.

Because she was an intuitive, once she had an idea of the long range plan for each project and where she fit into it, she could not only accomplish the details but even design new procedures. By only showing her the immediate tasks she became incapable of functioning, because she did not understand how one part fit with the next. She needed constructs and frameworks in order to function--even at the most basic level.

When this was explained to both sides of the team, they were able to "tolerate" each other's perspectives. Once they gave her the information that her intuitive side required, there was almost an immediate turn around in their ability to work together. Toleration grew into respect and valuation of each perspective.

This difference in perspective is especially evident in courses where theory, practice and the development of theory are paramount. Many of our adult students are sensory and many of the professors are intuitive. The data will follow to support this in the next section. As intuitives, professors value theories and concepts and seek to engage students in the weighing, creating and evaluating of theories, concepts and ideas. They are frustrated when students do not understand the purpose of theory and generalization.

One professor shared a frustration that he could not get his students to use or understand basic business theories, though he was convinced that they used and observed these theories in their workplace every day. From his description of his classroom techniques, it became clear that he was presenting the theory in a highly general and conceptual way to a group of largely sensing (specific) students. By adjusting his expectations and techniques, he was able to eventually bring the students to the generalizations that he wanted them to have. It required, however, that he begin from their perspective. He asked students to bring in incidents from work that illustrated a specific point (such as, immediate feedback, participatory management, etc). He then took these examples and built them into themes and categories in front of the students. He generalized from the examples and showed the students the theories that had been in operation within them. This "shift" enabled the students to build from the details to the generalizations for themselves.

The handouts in class can also enable to engage our students in the learning and understanding process. Syllabi are generally very linear. They are presented in a descriptive and outline form, and as such would appeal more to the sensory person. However, this linear presentation does not always fully represent the subject matter. The following syllabi are examples from a communications seminar at DePaul University. These examples present the same lesson in three different languages or perspectives. The first is a "traditional" representation of the basic points and ideas to be covered. The second is a pictorial but linear representation of the same material. The third, the mind map, is an associative representation of both the material and its interrelationships. The first two appeal to the sensory and the last to the intuitive.

Communications for Professionals (Brief Outline Session 3)

Session 3:

I. Debrief sessions 1 and 2
  - ---Return tapes
  - ---General feedback
  - ---Specific Examples

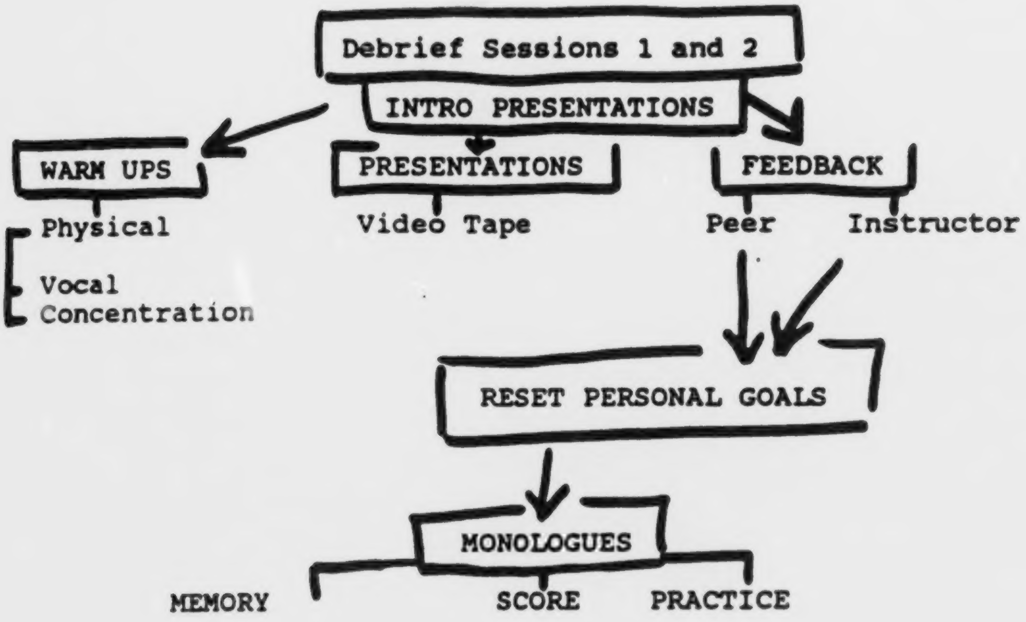
II. Warm-ups
  - ---Vocal
  - ---Physical
  - ---Concentration

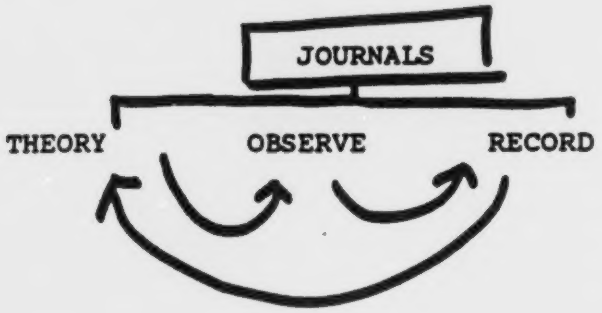
III. Intro Presentations
  - ---Preparation
  - ---Presentation

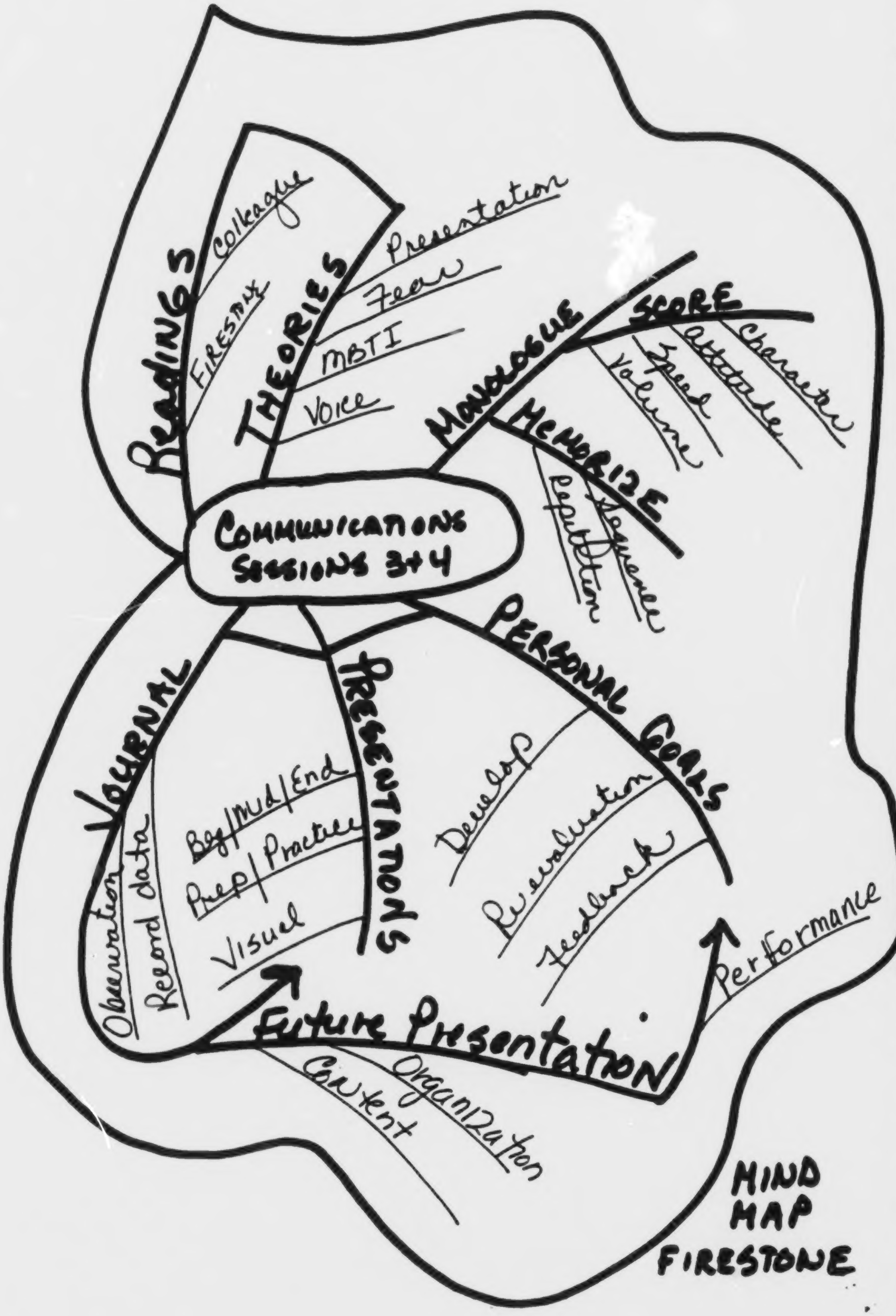
IV. Theories
  - ---Articles
    - --Students
    - --Instructor

V. Journals
  - ---Observations
  - ---Problems and Questions
  - ---Relationship to Theory

VI. Summary


Debrief Sessions 1 and 2
INTRO PRESENTATIONS
WARM UPS
PRESENTATIONS
FEEDBACK
Physical
Vocal
Concentration
Video Tape
Peer
Instructor
RESET PERSONAL GOALS
MONOLOGUES
MEMORY
SCORE
PRACTICE


JOURNALS
THEORY
OBSERVE
RECORD


COMMUNICATIONS SESSIONS 3+4
Readings
Colleague
FIRESTONE
THEORIES
Presentation
Fear
MBTI
Voice
MONOLOGUE
SCORE
Character
Attitude
Speed
Volume
MEMORIZE
Sequence
Repetition
PERSONAL GOALS
Develop
Reevaluation
Feedback
PRESENTATIONS
Beg/Mid/End
Prep/Practice
Visual
JOURNAL
Observation
Record data
Future Presentation
Content
Organization
Performance

MIND MAP
FIRESTONE

Thinking-----Feeling T/F

This scale relates to the system of evaluation or "valuation" that one uses to make a decision. It must be emphasized that both thinking and feeling are rational functions. Thinking does not imply "intelligence" and feeling "emotion", but rather, these terms describe the method or process used to weigh information before arriving at a conclusion. The thinking person uses a cause-and-effect or a logical, objective process in decision-making. He prefers to use impersonal criteria and/or to draw conclusions "objectively". The thinking person welcomes debate, often enjoys "the fight", and skepticism can drive him to greater levels of proof and analysis. He seeks to win the other over to his point of view, but will settle for consensus.

The feeling person weighs motives and human values in decision-making. He values warmth, affirmation and harmony. He does not enjoy debate, but prefers collaboration.

All of us use both processes. Thinkers are also concerned with human needs and feelers will step back from a situation to see it more realistically. But the bottom line is: Which one do you do last? Which one is the process on which you ultimately base your decision?

One example of this difference is evidenced through an exercise that was linked to a decision-style inventory. The feelers were placed into one group and the thinkers into a second group. Each group was given the assignment to cut 25%

from the bottom line of a division budget within a corporation where all of the cuts other than personnel had already been made.

The thinkers came up with a plan for simply taking the already existing job-analysis sheets, looking at the performance ratings and recent records (last 5 years of performance), and then listing the employees in order or performance (regardless of seniority) and cutting the bottom 25%.

The feelers, on the other hand, tried to imagine every possible alternative to cutting people. They considered shared benefits, reduction in overall salaries, job sharing, early retirement plans, everyone taking a "one day a month" reduction. They decided to have an "all division meeting" so that everyone would be informed of the problem and have a voice in the resolution before any recommendation or decision was made.

This difference in perspective is clarified further through an example from a workshop where thinkers and feelers were asked to tell each other what they did not understand about the other type in the workplace. (Also what confused them about the other type).

Thinkers were genuinely confused about the feelers' need for affirmation or the desire to give it. They could not understand why feelers had the need to affirm people, and found this affirmation insincere and impossible to "take-in". Thinkers wanted some acknowledgement for tasks that were well done, but not for themselves. Also, the work had to be excellent in the thinkers' evaluations in order for them to respect positive feedback from anyone. They saw the affirmation needs of the feelers as a type of insecurity.

Feelers felt that thinkers were cold, callous human beings who were missing an essential part of what makes life worth living. They did not understand why thinkers could not see that caring and affirmation made human existence more meaningful or pleasant. They wanted the workplace to be open and comfortable and felt that thinkers created "competitive" and detached environment by their "lack of need for others."

The thinking---feeling function can cause the most problems when opposite types are in longterm intimate relationships. The feeling person has a desire to give and receive love in "caretaking" ways. This can be perceived by some thinkers as co-dependency. While the thinking person may be willing to fill the need of the feeling person, these needs often need to be "clearly articulated and asked for" by the feeling person before the thinking person "decides to comply". The feeler would prefer that needs be anticipated, and sees "spontaneous niceties" as a way of life, not a planned exception.

The thinking---feeling difference is an important preference to keep in mind during evaluations of others, salary reviews, or even the type of feedback that adult students receive in classrooms or on their written work.

Judging------Perceiving J/P

This scale is related to our attitude to the outer world.

It helps us to understand our need for order, closure, openness and/or adaptability.

The person who prefers the judging attitude, prefers to live life in a planned and orderly way. He feels most comfortable when he can control and regulate life, and he prefers structure and organization. He prefers to have decisions made quickly and feels anxious when a decision has not been made. The judging attitude pushes for closure even when the information that he has is inadequate. Any decision is better than no decision.

The perceiving attitude prefers to live life in a flexible and spontaneous way. She enjoys gathering information and keeping her options open. A perceiving person would rather understand than control life. She embraces adaptation and change, and tends to resist closure to obtain more information. She believes that there is always more information available. A perceiving person feels anxiety when she must make a decision.

There are several ways to determine the judging---perceiving preference since it does evidence itself in the outer world. Judging people will almost always have work projects, papers, committee preparations, etc. done before the deadline. Perceiving people are usually eleventh and twelfth hour pushers. They will be working all night before the deadline to finally bring the work to closure.

It is the same in decision-making. Judging people will evaluate whatever information that they have available, and make a decision based on it. Perceiving people delay a final decision (whether it be a major work-related issue or what to do on a vacation) until sometimes after the point when it would have been best to make the decision. They feel anxiety at decision-making because it limits their options for the future.

A third way this attitude is evidenced is actually in the outer physical world. Judging people often have neat files, clear and accurate records, clean desks, labeled tapes, etc. The judging person requires order in his external world in order to think and operate in his internal world.

Perceiving people do not need an ordered external world to be able to process internally. They have "piles" instead of files, and generally live and work in environments that look very chaotic to the judger. The perceiver usually has an "associative" idea of how to find what he needs, but cannot work within the constraints of the judger's order and structure.

Additional examples of the J/P preferences in the outer world were collected by adult students through an exercise in a research seminar. Each student was asked to choose four people to observe during a ten week period - - 2 family members or friends and 2 co-workers. Students were introduced to the MBTI and especially the J/P descriptions. Students were asked to observe the environments of their subjects, listen to conversations with "closure/openness" in mind, observe decision-making style in meetings, etc. and to keep accurate and detailed records of their observations.

Mid-way through the exercise (5 weeks), students were asked to analyze each subject and determine the subject's J/P preference based on the accumulated data. They were also asked to substantiate their determination with actual examples. The results were both interesting and amusing.

People with the judging preference organized their audio and video tapes. Some purchased generic tape holders for the same of complete uniformity, and carefully labeled each tape with the same type of marker. Most judging people stacked and sorted their tapes by type and in alphabetical order. They had accurate and ordered office files (by date and/or topic), and sometimes kept lists of their lists.

Perceivers had tapes that were thrown into boxes, often outside of cases. Their offices were characterized by a series of piles and boxes. They admitted that when "it got too bad" they would move everything off the desk into another box and date the box ---- creating a temporary sense of "order".

Perceiving students had an easier time completing the research exercise than the judging students. The judging students did not always see the relationships between what they were observing and the theories that they were testing. They also wanted to know "how many observations, how long should the entries be, what am I looking for". Perceivers were more comfortable entering into the observations with a "general idea" and allowing the situations and observations to dictate the direction that the journals would take.

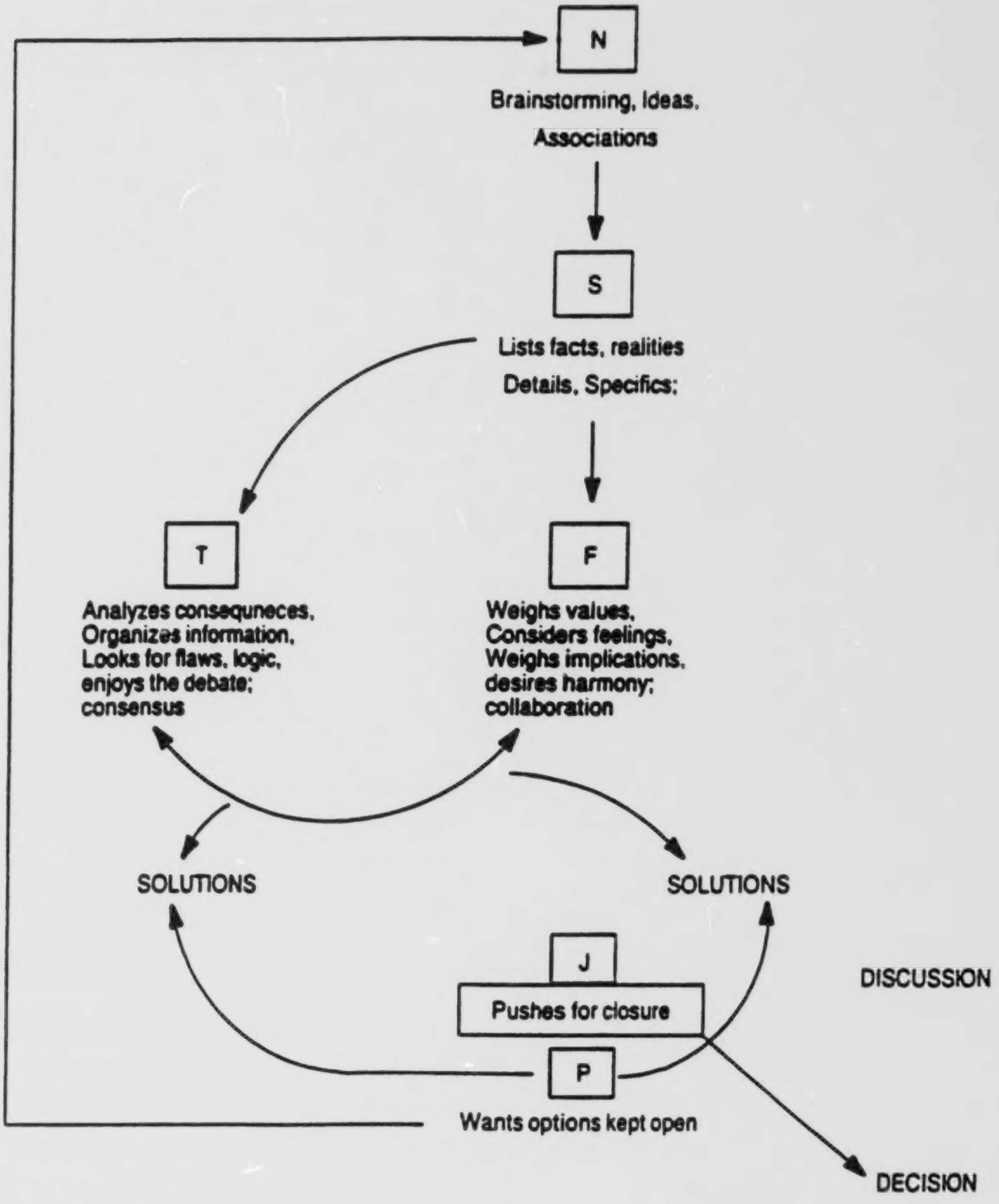
Summary and Applications

Understanding type preferences can enable us to use our strengths and the strengths of others for effective communication and decision-making. We can learn to compensate for our "less strong suits" by adding information or ways of presenting it that would not normally be our first choice. If we understand the contexts of others as seen through the theories of the MBTI, we can be in a better position to communicate *our* points of view through "language translations" into the other dichotomous contexts. We also can ask questions of others in their "language and context" to bring them into our context. These skills can build bridges between breached relationships, within teams and groups, and between ourselves and our students.

One application of using the strengths of all preferences can be found in the following model for group decision-making and problem solving. This model utilizes the value that each of the perspectives of type can contribute to the group process. It also suggests the *order* in which the facilitator could draw out the strengths of others for the greatest benefit to the group's decision-making process.

MODEL: FIRESTONE PROBLEM SOLVING

FIRESTONE PROBLEM-SOLVING MODEL USING MBTI STRENGTHS


N
Brainstorming, Ideas, Associations
S
Lists facts, realities
Details, Specifics;
T
Analyzes consequneces, Organizes information, Looks for flaws, logic, enjoys the debate; consensus
F
Weighs values, Considers feelings, Weighs implications, desires harmony; collaboration
SOLUTIONS
SOLUTIONS
J
Pushes for closure
DISCUSSION
P
Wants options kept open
DECISION

The first step in the process is to begin with brainstorming. Intuitives are particularly adept at this, but the facilitator would be careful to employ "time out" techniques to allow both introverts and extroverts equal participation. Also, at this stage, sensors are asked not to present reasons for why ideas won't work. The intuitives are given freedom to "blue sky" as many alternatives as possible.

Now that ideas have been presented, the sensors ability to see reality is drawn into the process. Sensors begin to list the details associated with each option, the potential for success or failure of each based on factual information and present day reality.

Next the thinkers begin to analyze these facts and project the logical consequences of each alternative based on objective cause and effect relationships. At the same time, the feelers will begin to consider the implications of each of these options for the people or values of the organization. The thinkers will attempt to debate and gain support for the alternatives that they consider the most logical and viable. The feelers will attempt to negotiate and collaborate in hopes of seeking a harmonious rather than a majority decision. Both groups will present options and will also present questions for further consideration.

During this process judgers will be anxious for a decision to be made and will keep trying to end the discussion and call for a vote. Perceivers will raise another set of questions and ideas during the discussion of the "call for a vote" and will try to keep the discussion and information gathering stage going as long as possible. Perceivers often prefer to leave things tabled for long periods of time. They want to go away and consider an option rather than deciding on it the first time it is raised.

A good facilitator tries to come to closure or to limit minor points or deviations so that the judgers feel on track. At the same time he keeps the discussion from ending with premature closure on important issues.

Groups with different types that are well facilitated will have a better chance of making decisions within comprehensive and well defined interactions related to the major issues than groups that are more homogeneous. When we learn to embrace the others' strengths we add to our intellectual and functional wealth.

A second application is using a practice based-model for gathering information about ourselves and our students using the MBTI as a theoretical guide. This model was tested through a series of faculty workshops at DePaul University.

Practice Based Model

Faculty from throughout the university were encouraged to participate in a workshop designed to help them be more responsive to the classroom needs of adult students. Faculty from the traditional and alternative schools were present, representing various disciplines. As was hypothesized, the faculty were largely intuitive (90%) and introverted (85%) and were dealing with a largely sensory population of students.

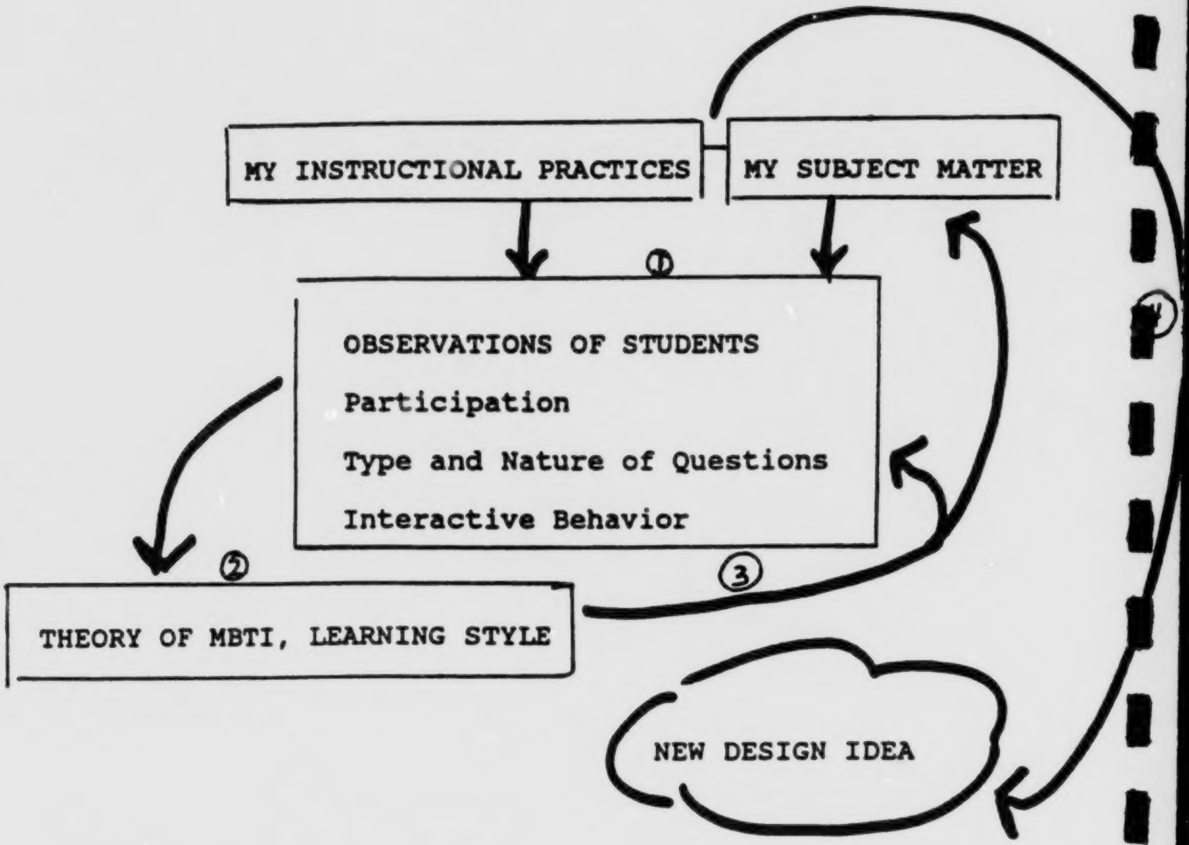
Faculty Workshop Exercise

The faculty were given the following instructions: Write about a classroom experience or teaching goal that didn't work. Include as many impressions as possible and as many details as possible about the situation, goal, students, presentation, etc. Also include your perceptions (thoughts or feelings) about why it may not have been successful. After you have completed recalling the experience, list the questions that have arisen from that experience. (Faculty were given 10 minutes to reconstruct and "journal" the teaching experience.)

The facilitator then explained the main theories underlying psychological type as represented in the MBTI using classroom examples to illustrate type preferences. AFter this explanation, faculty were asked to divide into groups of 3 with the following assignment:

1. Share your experiences; (from your journal assignment);
2. Discuss possible explanations of the incident through the application of the MBTI theories;
3. Generate ideas and problem-solve alternative ways of achieving the teaching-learning goal that did not work;
4. Choose a method and medium for reporting what happened in your group.

Some of the examples that were shared from these workshops have been presented in the previous pages. What was evident from all of the experiences, however, was that faculty were struggling to be true to the content or discipline of what needed to be presented at the same time that the content almost "fought against" an optimum learning environment. They began to explore the relationship between the subject matter, current instructional practices, and the instructional techniques that the discipline would suggest---with the students' needs, perceptions and ability to take in and incorporate information. The element of student observation became an important addition to the instructional scale of success. This interaction is represented the following model:


MY INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES
MY SUBJECT MATTER
①
OBSERVATIONS OF STUDENTS
Participation
Type and Nature of Questions
Interactive Behavior
②
THEORY OF MBTI, LEARNING STYLE
③
④
NEW DESIGN IDEA

The Alliance Pre-Conference Workshop will encourage participants to develop a personal set of questions and models for collecting and utilizing classroom and student observation for improving learning environments. It will build on the theories outlined in this paper and will enable participants to:

1. Use their strengths for effective communication in the teaching-learning and advising settings';
2. Compensate for their "less strong suits" by learning to alter their design and presentation styles to meet the needs of others;
3. Understand their contexts and others' contexts, and therefore be in a position to:
    a. Present points (instructional materials, etc.) in the "language" and contexts of others;
    b. Ask the kinds of questions that would enable others to enter their contexts.

SELF-STUDY EXAMINATION PROGRAM OF HIGHER EDUCATION FOR ADULTS IN CHINA

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Adult education is a means for men and women who no longer go to school full time to continue learning. In the United States, this approach to learning is also referred to as "continuing education." In the People's Republic of China, there are five similar programs that enable individual adults to continue their education and pursue a college degree. These five major continuing education programs of higher education for adults include the: (1) Television and Radio Broadcasting University; (2) Correspondence University; (3) University for Staff and Workers; (4) Spare Time University and (5) Self-Study Examination Program for Adults.

The Self-Study Examination Program for Adults is a program which was designed to provide adults an opportunity for higher education by establishing a new kind of open university with the authority to offer an academic degree or diploma. This program was first implemented in Beijing, Shanghai, Tianjing and Liaoning province in the 1980's. By 1985, 29 provinces and autonomous regions had such programs (Tao Zengping, 1986). This paper will focus on the Self-Study Examination Program (SSEP), including background information, organization and procedures, and the results and future development of the program.

Background of the Self-Study Examination Program

The establishment of the Self-Study Examination Program of Higher Education for Adults is not an expediency simply for contemporary problems, but a strategy to stimulate economic and social development, while making higher education available to the masses.

According to the 1990 vital statistics, mainland China's population, the largest of any nation in the world, reached 1.14 billion (Hou Ruili, 1991). As the population increased at a rapid rate, social problems and the demand for education increased. In the early 1980's, approximately four million students graduated from high school each year. Of this number only ten percent of the graduates could enter a university. As a result of limited opportunities and the youths' desire to learn, students demanded access to higher education.

During the ten years of "the cultural revolution" (1966-1976), colleges and universities almost closed. Most students, who graduated from the middle school during this period by completing ten years of public education, did not have the opportunity to obtain a higher education. When the turmoil was over, those students had became adults and had already passed the 26 years age limit to enter universities. They had become staff or workers who could not survive in today's high technological society. It was necessary to create favorable conditions for those individuals to have access to higher education.

From late 1970's to early 1980's, China set goals to achieve four modernizations: modern agriculture, modern industry, modern defense and technology (Zhao Ziyang, 1976). The key point of these four modernizations was economic development. China needed various additional professional personnel to achieve these goals. With the shortage of financial resources and teaching staff, it was impossible for universities to train enough professional personnel. The time had come for society to consider other alternatives for higher education for the masses.

Also during this period of time, the reform and open door policies gave people an opportunity to think about the 40 years of lessons learned since the founding of the People's Republic of China, especially the lessons of the so called "cultural revolution". During this revolution, education was grossly neglected and eventually destroyed as an institution. This made China one of the poorer countries in the world. Some professors and experts pointed out that education was a long-term investment. To build China into a strong country, the government needed to invest more in education, continue to run the current colleges and universities, and at the same time, set up an adult education program which would benefit both the individual and the society. Adult education was a short-term investment because adults have had certain social and work experience as a basis for their education. With this idea in mind, some concerned people in Beijing, Shanghai,Tianjing and Liaoning created the Self-Study Examination Program for Adults.

At that time, a variety of organizations were providing higher education for adults. However, in many of these institutions the graduates were unable to achieve the academic standards set by the state. To increase the reliability and credibility of the educational organizations and to provide alternative approaches to adult education, the Self-Study Examination Program (SSEP) was established.

The SSEP began in several geographical areas, but spread rapidly all over the country. By the end of 1986, nine academic subjects representing 60 areas of specialization were offered through the SSEP including: liberal arts, natural sciences, engineering, agriculture, medicine, economics, law, education, and physiology (Yu Xinfeng, 1986). According to the Central Educational Committee, 3.5 million people participating in SSEP took examinations. From this total number of examinees, 1.8 million persons in 17 provinces obtained certificates including 80,000 people who graduated with the equivalent of two-year or four-year college degrees (Tao Zenping, 1987).

The SSEP became and continues to be a viable alternative for adults in China to obtain a college degree. This program was successful in providing qualified personnel who could contribute to China's goals of economic and social development.

Self-Study Examination Program Organization and Procedures

Preparing for the Examinations

Any citizen may apply to take the examinations without age restrictions or whether the applicant has had formal schooling. Applicants may go to the local examination committee to obtain information about the program. If they decide to participate in the program, they apply to the committee, declare a major, and set professional goals. The committee will establish a file for each applicant and provide a list of references for the course. In addition, the committee will post an examination schedule so that the applicants can prepare for the examinations. After this, applicants study by themselves. When they feel they are ready for the examination, they register for the coming examination date.

The Examination Committees

At the national level, the central government appoints members to the National Self-Study Examination Committee. This committee is responsible for formulating the examination policies, principles, and regulations. In addition, the Central Examination Committee sets uniform standards for administering and monitoring the self-study examination process in each province or city.

There is an examination committee called the Local Self-Study Examination Committee within each province or city. The local committee administers relevant policies and regulations, provides guidance for self-study, and administers and grades the tests. Finally, the local committee grants an individual disciplinary certificate and diploma of corresponding schooling qualification.

Since the Self-Study Examination Program is an examination of the equivalent of formal schooling administered by the Educational Committee, the Self-Study Examination Program graduates have equal advantages as other graduates when seeking employment.

The Method of Examination

The method of self-study examination is similar to the final or exit examination given by a formal university. Applicants need to obtain a "C" to pass each individual course. If they fail the test, they may take the examination again. Each province or city adopts the examination for each academic discipline and assigns appropriate credits. This method is utilized by the examination committee, according to the professional training goals and the unified standard of the record of formal schooling.

The Requirements for the Diploma or Degree

The requirements for a junior college diploma are to earn a minimum of 75 academic credits by taking and passing approximately 12 courses. To be awarded a diploma for an equivalent of a four-year degree, the completion of 20 courses with approximately 125 credits is required.

Examinations are usually scheduled twice a year, in April and October. In general, two to four individual disciplines are examined at one time. Once the examinee passes a course, the student will be granted a certificate with the corresponding academic credit for a particular course. When the student has accumulated enough academic credits to meet the requirements of a certain major, a diploma will be awarded.

The Results of the Self-Study Examination Program

The launching of this program has greatly motivated individuals to engage in self-directed learning. Also, this program provides an alternative way for the training and selection of qualified personnel. People became convinced that education was not only the government's business, but also their own. Therefore, the self-study examination program became not only an examination system for awarding academic credit in various academic disciplines, it became a viable means of proving the value of adult education to the general population in China. This program has had tremendous effects on China's educational reform, including educational research for adults, changing the traditional ideas on education, and challenging China's higher education system.

Effect on Educational Research

Higher education research usually focuses on formal universities and colleges. In the implementation of the SSEP, researchers learned that formal schooling is not the only approach for people to receive a higher education (Li Fang, 1980). People who have had a general foundation of learning can also acquire an education through self-study or other means. As evidenced by successful participants in the SSEP, the ending of a person's school learning need not be the termination of one's education. Education can be continued throughout a life time with acquired learning and study skills. With the demand of modern science and technology and the increased need for improved manpower, life long learning is essential. However, educational research needs to answer a lot of questions about life long learning. For example, if the SSEP is a valuable way of learning, what is the function of teaching? What is the difference between the adult learner and the young learner? (Qao Bing, 1987).

Changing the Traditional Ideas about Education

Traditionally people in China believed that formal education was essential. Even though someone was knowledgeable and skillful, a person without a formal education from a college or university was held in low esteem. Also, people believed that education was just for the young, not for adults. The SSEP provided the opportunity for many in the society from different age groups to obtain a higher education (Mao Lirui, 1979).

When students graduate from the SSEP, they have not only acquired specific knowledge, but also needed skills to continue learning after a degree is awarded. They are able to compete with the students who have graduated from formal schools in the job markets and make significant contributions to the society. The SSEP proved that it is possible for adults to obtain an education and adults can in many cases learn as well as the young. At the same time, people realized that since education is everyone's responsibility, not just the responsibility of state or province, it was desirable to establish private schools and create additional alternatives to provide higher education.

(At present, no private schools have been established since the founding of the People's Republic of China.)

Challenging the Funding System in Higher Education

The education funding system of higher education in China has three essential points: (1) all funds of higher education are appropriated by the central or local governments; (2) all college students attending formal universities or colleges are eligible for student stipends and the government provides job opportunities when they graduate; (3) all the wages and welfare benefits of college and university staff are provided by the state (Wang Qinsi, 1987).

In contrast, operational costs of the SSEP are much less than operational costs for formal colleges or universities. Also, more students obtain diplomas through the SSEP than from formal universities or colleges. Since all participants in the SSEP must pay required fees, these students bear the economic responsibilities for obtaining a higher education. The SSEP staffs receive the same wages and benefits as the university staff, but experience more pressure and demands from students. Because the SSEP students are financing their own education, they feel that they have the right to request competent staff and teachers available to assist them. Obviously, the innovation and success of the SSEP challenge the formal system of higher education in China and establish that adult education is a short-term investment, which is good for both the individuals and the society.

Predictions and Prospective Development of the SSEP

The future of the SSEP is directly related to the continuation of the open door and reform policy of the central government of the People's Republic of China. If the open door and reform policy continues as a stable and consistent pattern, the future of the SSEP is optimistic. With optimism for the future, certain predictions relevant to the Self-Study Examination Program for Adults are made.

As the demand for the examination increases, local SSEP offices will be forced to rely on one or more large testing centers to develop test questions and to determine test reliability and validity. The testing centers will be computerized and will be able to provide test results in a timely and accurate manner. At the local level, SSEP centers will be able to provide more tutoring and advising services to a greater number of students. However, these changes will result in a higher cost for students.

In comparison with other formal programs and schools, the reliability and validity of the SSEP examinations will be enhanced, thereby assuring the quality of the participating examinees. The SSEP will continue to develop and improve examinations for the equivalent of the two-year and four-year degrees. In addition, examinations for equivalent master and doctoral degrees will be developed.

According to manpower need, the SSEP may become a viable means for in-service training and continuing education for the staff and workers who do not desire college degrees. For example, professional certificates indicating expertise and skills in a particular vocational field may be awarded exclusive of an equivalent college degree.

43

The SSEP may be improved by coordinating with other alternative forms of higher education. For example, the Television and Radio Broadcasting University and the Correspondence University have the advantages of broader coverage and less limitation of time and space. If the SSEP makes use of these advantages and a spirit of reform persists, the continued success and expansion of the Self-Study Examination Program for Adults in the People's Republic of China is inevitable.

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USING THE PRINCIPLES AND PROCESS OF ADULT LEARNING TO DEVELOP AN AWARD LEVEL PROGRAM FOR THE EDUCATION OF ADULT EDUCATORS: AN AUSTRALIAN CASE STUDY

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INTRODUCTION

This paper reports the development of a bachelor's level professional qualification for Australian adult educators. It recalls the context in which the program was conceptualized and the development process begun. It focuses on the principles which guided the deliberations of the program's developers. It outlines the program as it has operated and it describes the program's participants. It concludes by stressing those issues that all educators have to address in developing programs for the education of adults.

BACKGROUND

THE CONTEXT

Traditionally, people have entered the field of adult education from some other occupational field or in a part-time and/or voluntary role. Those who entered from other occupational backgrounds, usually held occupationally specific qualifications which were regarded as adequate for their new position. Many voluntary and/or part-time educators of adults did not possess formal post-secondary educational qualifications at all. This feature of recruitment into the field has contributed to the diversity, openness, strength and persistence of adult education despite its marginal status within the educational system. Nevertheless, this feature has a reverse side. Until quite recently the needs of individual adult educators for personal and professional development were largely left to those individual educators to organize and undertake as best they could. Consequently, adult educators developed professionally largely as a result of on-the-job experiences.

Since the late 1970s, in the state of New South Wales, (NSW) there has been an increase in the opportunities for the more formal and systematic development of adult educators. However, in the main these opportunities tended to be either short, non-credit workshops for the development of basic skills or formal accredited diplomas and degrees at the graduate level. This latter alternative was only open to those who held a degree level qualification but the overwhelming majority of practising adult educators did not, and still do not, hold qualifications at this level. It was to meet this need that there was introduced in 1983, a two-year full-time equivalent program of study leading to the award of the Associate Diploma in Adult Education. This program, though it led to an initial formal qualification, was only offered in the in-service mode to practising educators of adults. Each year since 1983, four sections of students have enrolled in the three strands of this program: two sections of trainers; one of community adult educators; and one of Aboriginal adult educators.

The Associate Diploma in Adult Education was designed to be a highly practical program of study which focused on the priority concerns of the participant and his or her work situation. It aimed to develop and refine practical competence in the areas of adult teaching and learning; program development and administration; and communication and interpersonal skills. However, as the program of study for the Associate Diploma unfolded, more and more of its participants began to make enquiries about opportunities for further study in the field of adult education.

THE INSTITUTION

The Institute of Technical and Adult Teacher Education (ITATE) was one of the six semi-autonomous institutes of Sydney College of Advanced Education (SCAE). SCAE had been formed on 1st January 1982, following the amalgamation of a number of largely inner city, predominantly teachers', colleges. The antecedents of ITATE went back to 1949, when the Department of Technical Education was set up to run the state's system of post secondary vocational education. The major pressure for the establishment of a separate department had come from the NSW Labour Council, the peak organization of trade unions within the state. The original, and for many years the sole, role of ITATE's predecessor was to provide initial teacher education, in the in-service mode, for newly appointed technical teachers. By the mid 1980s this situation was much changed. ITATE had almost 900 students and about 60 teaching staff organized into two schools: the School of Technical Teacher Education and the School of Adult Education. However, SCAE and ITATE did not out live the 1980s. There was begun in the late 1980s a second great round of consolidations and amalgamations of higher education institutions. SCAE was dissolved (as were all the NSW colleges) and its Institutes amalgamated with various Sydney based universities. On 1 January 1990, ITATE became the Faculty of Adult Education in the University of Technology, Sydney and on 1 January 1991, following the acquisition of a School of Teacher Education, was renamed the Faculty of Education. One factor, which has not changed over the years, is the firm commitment of the Institute and now the Faculty to providing high quality practical education for teachers who work with working people.

ASSESSMENT OF DEMAND

During 1984, ITATE conducted three small scale studies in order to assess more accurately the level of demand for the proposed Bachelor of Education (Adult). These studies were: a questionnaire survey of students currently enrolled in the Associate Diploma in Adult Education program; a series of structured interviews conducted by telephone with employers of adult educators; and an analysis of the positions vacant advertisements appearing in the Sydney Morning Herald (Sydney's principal morning newspaper). These studies all revealed strong support for the proposed program. The students felt that the Associate Diploma did not provide a sufficiently advanced qualification to open up for them the range of career opportunities then becoming evident in adult education. Of the employing authorities contacted, 70% though that such a qualification should be useful to members of their organization. More than half of all advertisements considered stated that an appropriate degree level qualification was essential. There seemed to be more than sufficient reason to proceed with the development of a full scale proposal. Under the terms of operation for higher education then applying in Australia, such a proposal had to be submitted to the N.S.W. Higher Education Board for accreditation. In Australia, all programs leading to accredited awards were fully funded by the Federal government within the student quotas set for each institution.

THE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT PROCESS: PARAMETERS AND PRINCIPLES

There were a number of principles which guided the deliberations of the program development process. The first was that the interests of the graduates of Institutes' Associate Diploma in Adult Education should be protected. The program should be constructed in such a way as to ensure that they would receive full credit (two years advanced standing) for their prior studies. The second and related principle was that the format of the program should permit participants to enter and leave the program at a number of points. Further, that those participants who did leave the program before completing the full degree program should be able to qualify for a lesser award. The third was that the program should be taught and learned in basically the same manner as the Institute's other adult education programs. It should be organized around four major types of teaching/learning activities: lecture/seminar programs; participant run workshops; individual learning contracts; and field experiences. The fourth was that the program should aim to bring the individual practitioner to a fuller understanding of his/her place within the wider world of adult education. Developing a broad perspective on the nature and context of adult education provide a firm basis for continuing professional growth. The final principle was that, in order to achieve accreditation, the proposal should meet the criteria, set by the Higher Education Board, for a program leading to an award at the Bachelor's level.

Within these parameters, the program development process was strongly influenced by four areas of scholarship and debate on the purposes and process of adult education.

- Policy statements by state, national, and international government authorities and organisations. (e.g., OECD, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1979; UNESCO, agencies 1972, 1976; Kangan Report, 1974; Kirby Report, 1984).

- Psychological and educational literature which supports the idea of a special kind of adult learning (e.g. Houle, 1972; Knowles, 1975, 1978, 1980; Boud, 1981; Mezirow, 1981).

- Research demonstrating the prevalence and/or efficacy of self-initiated or self-directed learning (e.g. Johnstone and Rivera, 1965; Tough, 1979, 1981; Lawrence, 1974; Caffarella, 1983).

- Educational and sociological commentary on the nature of adult education (e.g. Lovett, 1975; Gelpi, 1979; Lawson, 1979; Boshier, 1980; Lovell, 1980; Mee, 1980; Thompson, 1980; Griffin, 1983).

Common themes which cut across these four areas led a clearer specification of a number of issues which have long exercised the minds of thoughtful adult educators. Such issues conclude: the importance of autonomy and self-direction; needs based provision; the teacher-learner relationship; the integration of education and work; collaborative group learning; the distinction between adult and child learners; participation and access; and the credentialling of experiential learning. It was in this context and in an attempt to resolve at least partially some of these issues that the program proposal was formulated.

THE PROGRAM

RATIONALE

There have been identified two broad ways in which the professional education process can be managed: the higher education institution based and the field-based. Both approaches can have serious drawbacks. There can be a remoteness about institution-based programs. Field-based activities though certainly relevant, can be little more than an adult "show-and-tell". This program attempts to overcome these difficulties by adopting a field-focussed approach which is seen as a synthesis of the college-based and field-based approaches. It seeks to combine the advantages, and minimize the disadvantages, of the institution-based and the field-based models. The field-focussed approach emphasizes meeting the specific and immediate needs of the individual adult educator in the context of his or her working environment by bringing to bear the resources of the program. It makes the development of a true sense of professional partnership between program staff and participants.

One continuing criticism of many current programs of professional education has been that all participants are trained in the same way and must meet the same requirements. The identification of a number of "areas of competence", which set the parameters of the program, can overcome this criticism. The adoption of such a model offers scope for the participant to complete a sequence of learning projects consistent with the program's overall aims yet relevant to that participant's personal and organizational needs. The professional development of adult educators, like all real education, requires adaptation to meet individual needs. Adult educators vary enormously in terms of work context, skill level, knowledge and personal attributes. The fundamental principle undergirding the program is the same as that of all really educative endeavours, that the single more important aspect is the learner and where he or she is now.

AIMS

The general aims of the program may be grouped into four broad areas. The first group addresses the development of competence in the practicalities of being an effective designer, implementer, manager and evaluator of educational activities for adults. The second group addresses development of competence in understanding the foundational and supporting disciplines which provide insight into the process of adult learning. The third group addresses the development of an informed perspective on the historical social, political and economic context of adult education both within Australia and internationally. The fourth group addresses the development of personal capacities as a self-directed learner and a personal stance on the nature and purposes of adult education.

PROCESS

The program is organized around four major types of educational activities: lecture/seminar programs, workshops, individual learning contracts and field experience. Assessment is based solely on completed learning contracts, with the aim being for students to demonstrate competence in the variety of roles performed by the professional adult educator.

The **lecture/seminar programs** are designed to provide students with: an overview or framework which conveys the areas of competence required by the program; expert input; a model of teaching which demonstrates the way adult learning principles can operate in practice; and a forum where students meet regularly in a larger group.

The **workshops** provide an opportunity for students to work in small groups. Students, in groups of five or six, assisted by a staff member, are required to plan, implement, and evaluate two-day workshops which are attended by students in the larger group.

The **learning contract** approach allows students to design and implement their own learning projects. It is a structured method whereby each student in consultation with a staff adviser designs and implements manageable learning episodes. The emphasis is on making the activity relevant to the professional and personal needs of the student which are consistent with the aims of the program. The learning contract is an agreement between a student and a staff adviser that the student will undertake a specified activity and produce evidence that the activity has been successfully completed.

Field experience refers to a student's work (paid or unpaid) in adult education. This provides a context for the development of learning contracts and a setting for demonstrating competence in adult education.

CONTENT

The content of the program is organized in three broad strands: professional competence; foundational competence; and contextual competence. The focus in the professional competence strand is on those understandings, attitudes and skills the possession of which define the professionally competent adult educator. Adult educators are often under enormous pressure to do that which is the most expedient. The role of the foundational competence strand is to make explicit some of the moral and empirical complexities involved in the education of adults. Adult education does not operate in a vacuum. It is essential that the practitioner understands the wider historical, social, political and economic context of adult education. This is the role of the contextual competence strand.

STRUCTURE

The Bachelor of Education (Adult) is structured in two distinct parts, each of which involves two years full-time equivalent study. Part A of the program strongly emphasizes the development of the practical skills of the professional competence strand. Further, this part of the program is firmly field-focussed. Participants who decided to leave the program after completing this part would qualify for the award of the Associate Diploma. Part B of the program strongly emphasizes the development of more knowledge and attitudinal oriented learnings of the foundational and contextual strands as well as continuing the development of the higher order practical and theoretical components of the professional strand. This two part arrangement also facilitates the entry, with advanced standing, into the program of those adult educators who have been awarded the Associate Diploma in Adult Education. Those adult educators who hold other similar qualifications are awarded similar advanced standing after completing a bridging component.

THE CENTRAL ROLE OF THE ADVISOR

The traditional dichotomy between the teacher and the taught has come increasingly under fire. Moreover, there has been, in recent years, attempts to more clearly delineate the essential characteristics of adults as learners and to enumerate the implications of these characteristics for the adult education process. It is within this context that role of the adviser has been conceptualized. It is a multi-dimensional role, involving aspects of needs assessment, supervision, consultancy, counselling, monitoring, educational brokering and evaluation. It is also a most difficult role as many of its expectations, at least on first sight, would seem to be contradictory. Too often the values implicit in these aspects of the adviser's role are portrayed as mutually exclusive. They can be combined, but it takes more than a program design and a set of operating principles to achieve such a combination. The successful implementation of the adviser's role, and ultimately the success of the program, depends on the individual staff members who work in that role. Over the years, a small cadre of highly skilled staff, who are constantly willing to reflect upon and modify their mode of practice, has been developed. It is these staff members the program uses as advisers.

THE PARTICIPANTS

The Bachelor of Education (Adult) commenced operation at the beginning of the 1986 academic year with thirty (30) participants enrolled in Part B of the program on the basis of advanced standing granted for their successful completion of the Associate Diploma program of studies. Each year since then it has enrolled a similar number of participants at that point and on the same basis. It is unlikely, given the level of demand for places in the program from holders of Associate Diploma level qualifications, that Part A will be offered in the foreseeable future.

Over the years that the program has operated the average age of participants has been 39.3 years with a median of 39 and modes of 38 and 44 years. Less than one half (45%) of participants have been female. Only about half (48%) of participants had completed secondary schooling. However, a whole range of post-secondary qualifications are held. These are overwhelmingly qualifications awarded by the Technical Education system and include a broad spectrum of trade, post trade, technician level and various supervision/management certificates. Additionally, a small number of participants hold other vocational qualifications in the fields of nursing, librarianship and teaching.

In terms of their jobs before entering adult education a range of blue and white collar occupations have been represented. These have included farm labourer, railway worker, tradesperson, technician, nurse, teacher, secretary, police person, clerk, librarian, factory inspector, fire officer, supervisor, soldier and factory manager. The average period of involvement in adult education reported has been 7 years with a median of 7 years and a mode of 6 years. A number of current job titles is reported. These include union organizer, police educator, family life educator, coordinator of a community aid centre, training officer, nurse educator, technical instructor, development instructor, diabetes educator, equal employment coordinator, ABE teacher and training manager.

When asked "why did you enrol in the Bachelor of Education (Adult)", participants have provided responses which can be grouped into three fairly coherent sets. The most common set of responses has focussed on aspects of self development, e.g. "to prove to myself that I could do a degree level course of study". A second strongly supported group of responses had to do with the relevance of the qualification to career advancement, e.g. "wanted to increase options for career change/progression". The third group of frequent responses had to do with improving job performance and gaining a better understanding of the field, e.g. "to be able to better develop programs for Aboriginal adults" and "to gain a personal insight into and better understanding of the field".

Over the course of their enrolment in the program many participants have been able to upgrade their jobs and even change careers. A instructor of linesmen for the telephone company is now the training manager of a management development program. An office skills instructor with a rehabilitation centre is now the equal employment coordinator for the Fish Marketing Authority. A safety instructor is now a free lance occupational health and safety consultant. A part-time tutor is now an evening college principal. A volunteer instructor with the Girl Guides is now a full-time ABE teacher.

CONCLUSION

This paper has reported the development and operation of the first Australian bachelors level professional qualification for adult educators. In many matters of technical detail, this developmental process and the final form of the program are probably unique to Australia and its system of higher education. However, in developing and operating the program, the program's developers and staff have had to address a number of issues, which have long exercised (and will continue to exercise) the minds of all educators of adults. The program which has emerged from this process is not put forward as an ideal solution. It is merely seen as a first approximation of one "best" way to resolve some difficult issues involved in the education of adult educators.

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Track A

Understanding Adult Learners

The Adult Learner and Fear:
A Critical Combination in Academic Advising

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The support of the adult learner on an academic level is a core issue in the higher education reform movement (Schlossberg, Lynch, & Chickering, 1989). As a population, adult learners exhibit a higher level of fear and a higher group percentage of fear than their traditional counterparts (McClary, 1990; Sink & D'Abrosca, 1985; Usera, 1984). This population, then, has a significant occurrence of education related fears that need to be addressed by academic advisors. Therefore, the adult learner's perception of the help received from the academic advisor in lessening or controlling education related fear is significant to the student's academic satisfaction. The purpose of this study, then, was twofold: (a) to evaluate the adult learner's perception of the academic advisor effectiveness in helping him or her to lessen or control education related fear, and (b) to use these data to make recommendations for the future.

The method of research used was illuminative evaluation. This methodology lent itself to observation and in-depth exploration of the adult learner's perceived realities. The purposive sampling of 25 adult learners with education related fears was conducted through the use of instruments developed by the research: (a) an open-ended interview guide, and (b) an augmenting questionnaire.

Significant, then, to this study was an examination of the advisor-advisee relationship. Over one-half of the adult learners indicated their advisors were accessible, while less than two-third reported advisors were good listeners. Yet, over one-half of the adult learners perceived advisors were not genuinely concerned about the adult learners' satisfaction with the university. More than one-half of the adult learners believed they did not matter to advisors. The adult learners, though, were generally comfortable with advisors, and about two-thirds felt comfortable relating academic fears to advisors. Yet, when given a choice, two-thirds would rather discuss academic fears with a non-college based advisor. Most (80%) of the adult learners, however, did not discuss education related fears with academic advisors. This group, though, indicated they would have if the advisor had initiated the discussion of fears. Yet, of those adult learners who discussed their fears with academic advisors (20%), all received help.

The findings were analyzed in conjunction with current theories on fear, adult development, and academic advising. A paradigm was then generated. This paradigm is of significance because it will (a) improve advising, (b) provide increased options for adult learners, (c) provide adults with the academic support necessary for satisfaction, and (d) increase retention rates. This paradigm may be applied to any nonresidential campus that is moving toward positive change in serving adult learners.

INTRODUCTION

The "graying" of America has lead to the increased enrollment of adults in higher education (Cross, 1988; Schlossberg, Lynch, & Chickering, 1989). Educational demographics show an enrollment trend in higher eduction toward an increase in adult learners. The adult learner and the support of the adult learner on an academic level are core issues in the higher education reform movement (Schlossberg et al., 1989). Among higher education professionals who encounter the adult learner on an academic level is the academic advising staff (Schlossberg et al., 1989). One significant advising problem with the adult learner is the lessening or control of education related fears (Schlossberg et al., 1989). As a student group, adult learners exhibit a higher level of fear and a higher group percentage of fear than their traditional counterparts (McClary, 1990; Sink & D'Abrosca, 1985; Usera, 1984). For a few, fear can motivate. For some, education related fears can cause inhibited performances. In others, this same fear can cause severe dehabilitation which can result in failure and/or attrition. Logically, poor performance will lend to low retention rates. Psychological counseling will indeed help the students, but academic advisors need some practical knowledge and techniques for early intervention, constant reinforcement of preferred behavior, and retention (Cross, 1988; Lewis, 1984; Lopez, 1988; Lydiard, 1984; Metzner, 1989; Schlossberg et al., 1989). "For adult learners, academic advising is particularly crucial. When they move into the institution, they already feel behind" (Schlossberg et al., 1989, p. 124). Technology has also added a new dimension to education and to adult learner fears.

Higher education will have to develop new programs to meet the particular needs of this age group for institutional survival, especially the very common barrier of fear related to the educational environment. As Cross (1988) has concluded, "the construction and testing of plausible theories for examining barriers...is a powerful tool that has not yet been adequately utilized in adult education" (p. 108).

METHOD OF RESEARCH

This study used illuminative evaluation as the mode of inquiry. This process of evaluation was developed by Parlett (1974), Parlett and Dearden (1977), and Parlett and Hamilton (1972). The problem under investigation focused on the adult learner's perception of the support received from the academic advisor in lessening or controlling his or her education related fears. The purpose of this study was to (a) evaluate the adult learners' perceptions of academic advisors' effectiveness in helping them with education related fear, and (b) use the data to make recommendations for the future. Because illuminative evaluation was used, the hypothesis emerged from the study itself. The purposive sampling of 25 adult learners was bound by the context of the problem. The instruments used in this study were developed by the researcher: (a) an open-ended interview guide, and (b) a questionnaire to augment the interview guide. Thus, the context for this study was set.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Both qualitative and quantitative data are presented in this analysis, therein incorporating multiple realities of the participants and objective facts. The two methods interact to uncover patterns that underlie behavior. According to Guba and Lincoln (1989), one technique for verification is the emergence of issues that include all data. However, not all of the data are likely to fit an emerging pattern. Yet, when a reasonable number is reached, a pattern is established.

Therefore, in this study, all data were reported, both qualitative and quantitative. Quantitative data were gleaned from both the interview and the questionnaire, while qualitative data were from the interview. However, responses of 25% or more for each issue on either the interview portion alone or combined with the questionnaire, or responses of 25% or more for issues revealed by the questionnaire alone, are considered to be reasonable numbers. Since illuminative evaluation focuses upon thick description and interpretation, the quantitative data serve a supportive role in the emergence of issues: to judge goodness and to support consistency and predictability.

The questionnaire was presented to the respondents first. Therefore, it served as a trigger mechanism for perceptions that were uncovered at a later time in the indepth interview. The relationship between the questionnaire data and the interview data is synergistic. When both are presented for the same issue, the quantitative data is recognized as reactive only. It serves to augment the illuminative data, or interviews, which were subjected to a member check for credibility. Thus, the rationale for patterns is established. Data which do not fall into a pattern are labelled as idiosyncrasies.

FINDINGS

Relationship with Advisor

The adult learner's relationship with his or her advisor is significant to the study. It is central to the purpose of the study, which is to evaluate the adult learner's perception of the advisor's effectiveness in helping the learner to control or lessen his or her fears. In this light, then, positive relationships must be established in order to create an environment conducive to giving (advisor) and receiving (adult learner) that help. Also, this section casts light upon the advising process.

In the questionnaire section of the study, over one half of the respondents reported their advisors were "readily available." In 1989, Halpin found that students defined academic advising as "having someone available" (p. 28). As indicated by Schlossberg et al. (1989), the advising center should be organized for learner convenience, not faculty convenience. Therefore, evening, early morning, and weekend hours will become the norm rather than the exception.

The availability of advisors is crucial to the cohesiveness of the university. When 40% of the sample population felt that access was inadequate, then adult learners' needs are not being met. This is indicative of the advising structure for adult learners (who comprise 46% of the university) being the same as the structure for traditional students.

Also in the surveys, less than two thirds of the respondents indicated their advisors were "good listeners". One third of the respondents reported that the ability to listen is the foundation for any relationship and is critical to the advisor/advisee relationship. As advising moves from a mechanical registration perspective toward a proactive student service orientation, the ability to listen will take on increasing significance. Currently, then, 33% of the respondents are not being afforded an opportunity for growth toward fulfillment of higher order needs. Listening is imperative in this process. A pattern, therefore, emerged. Good listening involves the use of attending responses by the advisor to indicate to the adult learner that the advisor is listening. This also includes feedback and questioning. Perhaps the most significant attribute of a good listener in academic advising is the communication of respect for the advisee. As Moos (1979) described the process, it is "...the extent to which they [parties involved] express themselves openly and freely" (p. 15). Because advising should involve more than registration, (Schlossberg et al., 1989), the ability to listen is one vehicle by which the advisor can enhance the advisee's personal and academic development.

Mattering

In the questionnaires, nearly one half respondents indicated their advisors were "concerned" about their progress in school; over one half reported their advisors were not "concerned" about their progress in school. Also, respondents articulated that their advisors were "not genuinely concerned" about their overall satisfaction at Purdue University Calumet. When asked in the survey if the respondents believed they "matter" to their advisors, nearly one half answered positively, and more than one half reported they did not "matter" to their advisors. Yet, most trusted their advisors. Only one half of the respondents also indicated their advisors were concerned about the total person. Mattering to the university is significant to retention and satisfaction for students (Astin, 1984; Bean & Metzner, 1985; Johnston, 1987; Schlossberg et al., 1989).

As Schlossberg et al. (1989) found, "adults who score high in mattering--that is, who feel noticed, appreciated, and depended upon by the institution--will become and remain more involved in higher education" (p. 29). Schlossberg et al's (1989) major thrust of emphasis in their own theoretical framework was the need to matter. The adult learner population needs "to feel appreciated and noticed" (p. 21). Mattering "refers to the beliefs people have, whether right or wrong, that they matter to someone else, that they are the object of someone else's attention, and that others care about them and appreciate them" (p. 21). Schlossberg and Warren (1985) found that mattering by an advisor or institution kept the adult learner enrolled. Five dimensions of mattering were developed by Rosenberg and McCullough (1981):

(a) attention: interest or notice of another person;

(b) importance: someone cares about the individual;

(c) dependence: focus on one individual's dependence on another;

(d) ego-extension: others proud of an individual's achievements and disappointed with failures; and

(e) appreciation: others are thankful for the individual.

The facilitator for mattering is the academic advisor, for it is the advisor who is a key link between the university and the adult learner. When this link is strong, retention is high and educational policy is effective. The advisor can create a sense of personal recognition for the adult learner. And that which is good for the adult learner is good for the entire university.

If only 50% of the adult learner representative population felt they mattered to their advisors and the entire university, then satisfaction is not being experienced by 50% of the population. The other half reported total satisfaction with the university and with their academic program at Purdue University Calumet. The involvement that is so necessary for student success and retention is not entirely present, though. This should be of significant concern to advisors and administrators. The initiator of mattering is the academic advisor. This research has found the link between the advisor and the adult learner to be weak. Educational policy and the university's mission is also weakened by the lack of mattering. Administrators should find significance in the perceived weakness. Personal recognition of adult learners will bring a plethora of benefits to the university, including a positive, strong community image and revenue. Academically, the adult learner will benefit from the involvement. Involvement generates motivation and interest, which will in turn generate academic satisfaction and success. It is common knowledge that what is good for the adult learner is good for the entire university.

In the questionnaire portion of the study, the respondents were "generally comfortable" with their advisors. About two thirds of the respondents felt "comfortable discussing problems" with their advisors. About one half of the respondents felt "comfortable" relating their academic fears to their advisors. Yet, when given the choice, two thirds would rather discuss their academic fears with a non-college based advisor.

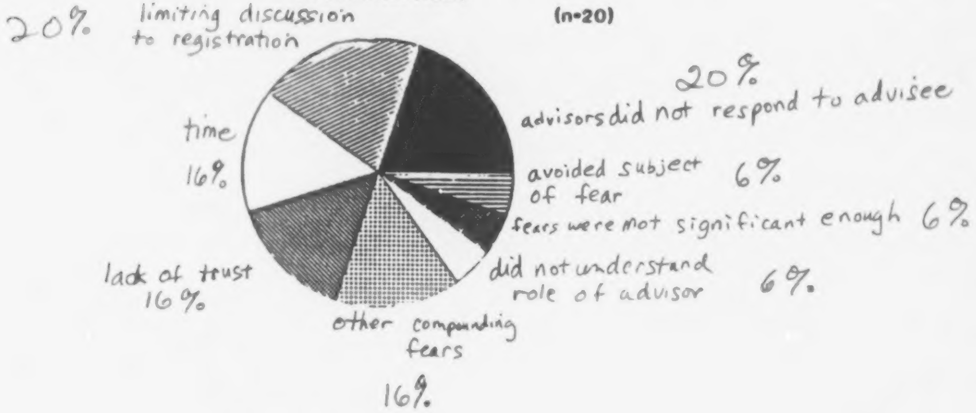
Although 50% of the respondents said they felt comfortable relating their academic fears to their advisors, 66% of the 50% would rather discuss these fears with a personal counselor. This disparity is attributed to several factors: (a) the adult learner's lack of knowledge as to the roles of advisors and the advisors' areas of responsibility, (b) advisors who were also teaching faculty and/or department chairs, and (c) incomplete information disseminated by the university that does not communicate to the general student population the other roles of advisors. There are also perceived conflicts anticipated by respondents when advisors are in a dual role (see Discussion of Fears with Advisors).

There is a disparity between expressed comfort with the advisors and the preferred use of the non-college based counselors. The respondents are under the misconception that advisors only register students; that the advisors' mission is to create a schedule of classes. The advisor role is actually more comprehensive, including developmental counseling, career counseling, and performance counseling.

Discussion of Fears with Advisors

During the interviews, it was found that most adult learners did not discuss their academic fears with their advisors. Of those who did, 100% did receive help from their advisors in controlling those fears. The reasons for not discussing fears can be found in Figure 1.

Figure 1
Respondents' Reasons for Not Discussing Fears with Advisors
(from interview)



The majority of respondents indicated they did not discuss their fears with their advisors. A general attitude of insensitivity on the part of advisors was perceived by the adult learners. The insensitivity that was exhibited by advisors was looked upon by students as inappropriate behavior for the advisor's role. It also made students extremely uncomfortable, and only added to their anxieties. It was found, though, that if advisors would have initiated discussions of fears, the adult learners would have entered into meaningful dialogue with the advisors, and would be comforted by such a discussion. A proactive, intrusive approach by advisors is the best approach for adult learners.

It is significant that these students believed their advisors should possess a sixth sense; that they should pick up on cues the respondents send. Schlossberg et al. (1989) suggest sensitivity is a necessary characteristics for advisors of adults. It is indeed interesting that as the issues emerged from this area, the respondents revealed that they would have discussed their fears with the advisors if the advisors had initiated the discussion. This proactive stance then, suggested by Foxx (1990), is desirable for the adult learners. The students, in essence, had no idea what areas of their academic lives were appropriate to discuss with advisors, yet they all had a preconceived idea of what behavior was appropriate for the advisors. The intrusive (Backhus, 1989) and proactive (Foxx, 1990) models would be very positive for this population. Lopez (1988) also confirms this.

Privacy is also embedded within the discussion issue. The adult learners felt that their privacy was not being respected. Privacy must be addressed when the advisor is working with the adult learner. Many of the advising offices do not have the physical capacity to be private. There are no walls, nonetheless doors, that can be closed. During off-campus registrations, no attempt is made at one on one, private advising meetings because of the physical environment which is usually a hallway. The student is advised in front of all the registrants. Therefore, any communication is held to a minimum. Adults will not publicly discuss their fears (Rachman, 1990). Additionally then, when an adult has an advisor from their same social circle outside the university, the advisor needs to reassign that student immediately. Otherwise, the student will indeed intentionally limit advising to registration.

Time was another issue of concern. For this group of respondents, time is associated with mattering. There is a direct correlation as perceived by the adults. Advisees who were rushed through the process became extremely anxious because they were not given time to (a) know their advisors, (b) assimilate information, (c) develop questions, (d) ask questions, and (e) tell the advisors who they are. It was frustrating for the adults to be prohibited from creating a necessary, one-on-one relationship.

Another consideration is the length of time the advisee must wait to see an advisor, and the length of time the advisor spends with the adult learner. For adults, time is a matter of perception. Respondents perceived "waiting all day" to see an advisor and "in and out" once they did. Obviously, under these perceptions, advising has not been effective for this group of respondents.

Respondents also felt very uncomfortable revealing fears to an advisor who was also a department chair or professor in their major. They felt they were showing a weakness in character by admitting their fears to someone who would one day be in a position to evaluate the adult learner in the form of job or graduate school recommendations. These respondents had been given no indication that confidentiality is a very integral part, or should be, of this relationship. Indeed, this is not just an issue of confidentiality. Education is a vehicle of facilitation to reach self-actualization. Therefore, education is growth. For most adult learners, then, a part of that growth is acknowledging and confronting fear. This is a process advisors should respect.

The majority of respondents interviewed admitted they really did not understand the areas of responsibility for advisors because of a lack of information. The university and the individual advisors did not inform the adult learners about what advisors actually do. On the one hand, they all carried from high school preconceived notions of what characteristics an advisor should have (e.g., concern for students and knowledge of curriculum). On the other hand, the respondents still thought that the only responsibility of a college advisor is to register students. It is significant that misconception was only promoted during the first visit with their advisors. In essence, students have not been adequately informed about what an academic advisor does or should do. The current advising system only perpetuates the advisor as registrar, when, indeed, a clear distinction would be drawn between the two functions. One respondent believed that discussing her fears with her advisor would comprise socially unacceptable behavior for an adult, when, indeed, it is most appropriate to discuss fears with an advisor. The respondent would have discussed those fears anyway, had the advisor given her an opening. The role of academic advisor is far more effective when expanded into the realm of student-centered development (Chambliss, 1989). The proactive and intrusive orientation that reflects current advising theory has not been established. For those who did discuss their fears with advisors, the embedded issue was found to be the advisors' ability to listen and their willingness to take the time to listen.

Help from Advisors

During the interviews, the respondents indicated that their academic advisors did not help with their fears. All respondents interviewed reported they would discuss their fears with advisors if the advisors initiated the discussion.

Advisors at Purdue Calumet were not helping adult learners to lessen or control their fears. For the mere fraction, the 20%, of the advisors who do help, the students recognized their help as significant, effective, and appreciated. This help consisted of listening, understanding, and affirming somewhat shaky decisions. Quality time was spent with the advisees. This research indicated that advisees wanted help from their advisors. They wanted suggestions, options, and strategies to lessen or control their fears. Frightened advisees needed their advisors' attention.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In the advising situation itself, there emerged recommendations for preferred advisor behavior that would help lessen or control adult learners' education related fears. The recommendations that are starred (*) emerged directly from suggestions by the respondents. These suggestions would also enrich advising sessions for students. To enhance the advising situation, advisors can

- recognize and communicate to the advisee that adulthood is a dynamic life phase;
- address any misconceptions about the adult life phase held by the advisee;
- refute the industrial mentality (work for the sake of an income only);
- discuss expectations: (a) the university's expectations of the adult, and (b) the adult's expectations of the university;
- communicate a caring, sensitive attitude;

78

- discuss the parameters of advising during the first session;
- initiate a discussion of education related fears through intrusive advising;
- allot time for advisees to (a) gain necessary background information that is needed for informed decision making, (b) assimilate information, (c) develop questions, and (d) ask questions;
- know their advisees by name;
- stress, at the first meeting, that the confidentiality inherent in the relationship will be respected under all circumstances;
- emphasize the negative ramifications of continuing fears on choices, options, and freedoms;
- present strategies that the adult can use to lessen or control continuing fears so choices, options, and freedoms are open to the adult learner;
- not allow adult learners to use age as a determining factor in decision-making;
- schedule an initial meeting before classes begin to discuss fears (subject to be initiated by advisor), study habits, time management, and strategies for success*;
- teach the student how to read the schedule of classes, and how to set up a schedule*;
- keep accessible hours, especially for working students (flex hours are recommended)*;
- separate advising from registration*;
- maintain an open-door policy*;

- take time to listen and counsel*;
- ask directly about fears and anxieties; encourage the adult learner to talk about them; to present them, initiate discussion*;
- be open*;
- keep accurate records*;
- discuss the future*;
- approach the subject of graduate school and graduate school entrance examinations*;
- allot time during the initial advising session to discuss family attitudes and values;
- help the learner to place class performance in perspective;
- continually remind advisees that change is growth;
- discuss the expectation level of professors;
- address the positive qualities an adult brings with them into the classroom;
- initiate a discussion of performance anxiety;
- communicate effectively;
- practice full disclosure of correct information;
- question the adult learner as to the incident or thoughts that triggered their entry to the university;
- initiate a discussion to identify foreseeable barriers with the advisees;
- consider barriers when scheduling courses, meeting times, and total hours per semester;
- continually motivate the advisees;

- acknowledge movement toward the goals set by advisees during the initial sessions;
- tell adults that age is an overall asset to learning;
- discuss with the adult learner the antagonistic relationship of taking a longer time to learn material, but having less time to spend learning;
- tell the adult learner that practice will bring speed and efficiency; and
- explain to the advisees that the significant issue is not age, but time away from a formal classroom situation.

SUMMARY

Fear is the topic most students, especially adult learners, will not approach with an advisor or any other faculty member without prompting. Yet, fear is foremost in the mind of adult learners. This research has addressed this issue from the perceptions of the adult learner and presented practical solutions grounded in sound theory. It also emphasized "knowing," which in turn will alleviate basic fears. Although this paradigm was developed for a particular group of students at Purdue University Calumet, Hammond, Indiana, it still may be applied at any commuter campus whose adult learners have articulated the same concerns. Additionally, improvements that are made for the adult learner population are improvements that will enhance the entire academic community. As research confirms, perceptions construct reality.

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The Use of Peer Support/Study Groups for Registered Nurses (RNs) in a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) Program

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An external degree college for adult distance learners, Thomas Edison offers no classroom or clinical instruction, but does offer adults the opportunity to complete an associate or baccalaureate degree by documenting college-level learning through methods such as examination and portfolio assessment. Its BSN program was established in 1983 to make the preferred credential within the nursing field -- and the one required for graduate study -- available to thousands of associate degree and hospital-based diploma graduates in New Jersey. With a professionally accredited assessment BSN program already established at Regents College in New York, Thomas Edison sought an agreement to use the Regents' examinations for its BSN component rather than commit the time, effort and funds required to develop a similar program. This baccalaureate nursing component requires all students to pass a series of prescribed, nationally standardized nursing examinations, five cognitive and four performance, for a total of 48 credits. Intended essentially as a self-directed study and preparation program designed to document baccalaureate-level learning, these examinations assess knowledge and skills comparable to those acquired through an instructional BSN program.

The five cognitive examinations, four credits each, assess theoretical knowledge through objective questions. Study guides developed by the Regents faculty are provided by the American College Testing Proficiency Examination Program, and the examinations may be taken at any established ACT-PEP test center. The four standardized performance examinations, taken only by appointment at one of five national test sites, document application of knowledge through three testing sessions: a three-day clinical nursing skills examination in a hospital patient care setting for eight credits; a one-day, six-credit health assessment examination and two-credit health teaching examination in a hospital outpatient setting; and a three-day video-simulation assessment of professional knowledge and skills in a classroom setting for twelve credits. Study guides developed for these examinations and provided to the students detail all aspects of the examinations and provide the basis for their preparation.

Relatively inexpensive at $55 dollars each, the cognitive examinations have produced little anxiety and few failures. The majority of students also complete the performance examinations successfully, but these complex, criterion-referenced examinations generate a great deal of anxiety. This is attributable to several factors: the nature of three of these examinations (one-on-one testing by a clinical examiner); their length, the amount of content tested, the cost (approximately $850 each plus travel, hotel, meals, etc.), the elapsed time since their days of supervised student-nursing experience, arrangements for work and family during the examination weekend and the implications of failure.

When self-paced and combined with flexibility in methods of earning other credits, Thomas Edison's assessment approach offers the opportunity to conserve time and finances through enabling continued full time employment and eliminating the need to commute regularly to a campus or to clinical agencies. For many RNs this flexibility is essential and yet:

> "I think that the hardest part about an adult distance learner is getting enough discipline into your routine so then it becomes not so much a discipline as it becomes a routine; for an hour each evening I'm going to do this, trying not to get sidetracked by cookie baking or children wanting something."

Anticipating these potential difficulties, and recognizing the benefits of collaborative learning and peer support, the College initiated a statewide network of peer support/study groups. Intended to bring together RN students with diverse experience and education but common goals, the groups were organized geographically according to place of work or residence and located at sites with appropriate resources. With no faculty to teach and guide their learning nor structure to provide opportunity for regular contact with other students, the study groups were to offer a classroom alternative appropriate to the needs and lifestyles of busy adult learners. To provide direction in group dynamics, goal setting, interpretation of study materials, and locating resources, masters-prepared, experienced nurse practitioners and educators serve as group facilitators.

Ten study groups were organized and began meeting in the summer of 1985. Lack of interest, inability to participate because of time or distance, and the number of students not ready to participate led to several groups disbanding and fewer participants in the remaining groups than desired. Despite favorable feedback on formal evaluation by the group participants and efforts to make the groups more attractive, the number participating overall remains small. Reports of students striking up relationships at the examinations, recruiting others into the program, and seeking to meet colleagues through the nursing office all have shown, however, that the majority of RNs in the program do value peer involvement. It also indicates that fostering peer support in a distance learning, self-paced BSN program requires alternatives to the present study group model.

The few reports available regarding the use of peer support/learning in nursing education have focused on groups that have regular classroom contact; involve generic rather than RN students; are episodic rather than programmatic in planning; or focus on social or academic support but not both. Responsive to the health needs and responsible to external regulatory bodies, the nursing profession has traditionally emphasized individual excellence, a competitive rather than collaborative model of education with supervised clinical practice as an essential component. By contrast, BSN completion programs can offer nurses already licensed the opportunity for collaborative learning and validation of the knowledge they have already gained.

With the announcement that the National Center on Adult Learning was sponsoring practitioner research projects, including studies of adult peer groups, came the opportunity to look more closely at the dynamics of the BSN study groups and the support needs of RNs in BSN programs. Specifically sought was information about the benefits derived from participation in the Thomas Edison BSN study groups, possible strategies for increasing participation, other types of support considered important by RNs in the Thomas Edison and other BSN programs and the methods used to facilitate peer support in other programs.

During the period of this study, from 1983 to 1990, 502 RNs enrolled in the Thomas Edison program; 52 graduated, 131 are still active, and 319 are inactive. Of the 502, 96% are female, most with home and family responsibilities. Approximately half are graduates of hospital-based diploma programs and the other half from associate degree programs; several have baccalaureate and advanced degrees in other disciplines. Experience in nursing varies by type and length of practice, with many holding professional certification in their area of practice. Period of enrollment also varies, from the program's inception in 1983 until the time of the survey, with the graduates covering the time period from December 1986 through June 1990. Since all enrolled students have had the opportunity to participate in the peer groups, all were included in the study through a mailed questionnaire, an invitation to participate in a follow-up discussion, and a review of the examination performance of graduates. Additionally, the deans of 50 of the 95 RN BSN programs listed in Baccalaureate Education in Nursing: Key to a Professional Career in Nursing 1989-90[1] were randomly selected for inclusion in the study through a mailed questionnaire.

Results of the Study

Preparation of the final report is in progress. The following is a summary of findings.

Benefits derived from participation in the Thomas Edison BSN study groups

Current and former study group participants were asked to rate, from very important to not important, the significance of support activities within the groups.

Dealing with the stress of the program, second in rank order, was considered very important by 72% of the 43 study group participants.

Learning activities related to the examination objectives and experience were selected as very important by 65-74% of the study group participants, while 51-63% selected time management, motivational techniques, meeting other students and scheduling the examinations with others as very important.

Least important of the study group support activities were using library resources (14%), improving study habits (28%), and locating other learning resources (37%).

Performance of the graduates on the nursing examinations

Overall, the graduates in the study did well on the examinations, with an 87% initial pass rate for study group participants and a 94% pass rate for non participants.

Two of the four performance examinations have individually graded components for a total of 13 graded (pass/fail) components on the examinations. The eight-credit, three-day hospital based clinical skills examination tests lower division basic nursing content familiar to the RNs. The accompanying stress and anxiety apparently stem from concerns about currency of basic nursing skills and the one on one encounter with the clinical examiner. Most students, however, praise these examiners and the conduct of the examinations! Ironically, despite the home and family arrangements required, staying overnight actually seems to diffuse the stress because of the increased peer interaction this allows. Students report having dinner together and enjoying swimming and other leisure activities as well as the inevitable review, discussion and study.

The one-day health assessment and teaching examinations administered in a hospital outpatient setting are detailed in content and more concentrated in time. This session appears particularly stressful, perhaps in part because students tend to travel long distances, arrive just before the examination and leave immediately afterwards. With little time for peer interaction and relaxation comes little opportunity to diffuse stress or re-group as needed. Both study group participants and non participants had more difficulty with two of the three parts of this examination than any of the other performance examination components.

The last performance examination focuses on four major dimensions of nursing in a 12-credit examination in a classroom setting over a three-day period. Although this examination has its own unique stress, most students will stay overnight and have a chance to meet informally, relax together, and, as is often reported, help each other clarify aspects of content.

Thus overall, the students are successful on the required nursing examinations, but the stress factor is high, particularly in preparing for and taking the performance examinations. Passing is cause for celebration. Failure, not only stressful in itself, has serious implications for program completion: support at this time can be crucial.

> "I remember this revelation-meeting someone who actually failed and survived. I was very impressed with that."

Important types of support other than study groups

Participants in the study; 94 Thomas Edison BSN students and graduates, and 34 deans of other BSN programs all report that many types of support are needed for RNs to participate in a BSN program. Primary support factors for all groups are: family, flexibility in work and academic schedules, and tuition reimbursement.

And yet for the social support, and for learning what's needed to complete the nursing requirements, for the Thomas Edison students:

> "It's peer support. We had the opportunity to talk with some students who graduated and that was very good for me to at least get started. It was like you can do it; here's someone who's lived through it."

> "The last exam we just ended up all at the same hotel and spent the evenings together studying. I shouldn't say studying; picking each others' brains, pulling ideas, and it was amazing to me how some people had simplified something that seemed so complex to me. They

were saying I was doing the same thing for them."

Whereas for RNs in classroom-based programs where more structure and opportunity for peer interaction already exist:

Sixty-eight percent of the deans reported students tend to work independently rather than together; and, of the six methods listed to facilitate peer support, only required group projects/assignments is used according to a majority of the deans (85%). Even then:

> "Group projects must be thought through very carefully because it is difficult for all classmates to work on a project with different work schedules."

> "We have found that RN students have little time for organizations, etc."

Summary

Regardless of curriculum approach, family, flexibility in work and academic schedules, and tuition reimbursement are key factors that enable RNs to participate in a BSN program. Seen as independent learners in both traditional and distance learning settings, RN students in the Thomas Edison program are seen to rely more on peers than on faculty or staff for both the learning and psycho-social support needed.

Resourceful adults, the Thomas Edison RNs have met the challenge of this distance learning, self-paced, assessment program by reaching out to peers. Whether study group participants or not, they have actively sought and/or developed their own supportive peer relationships, their own "support systems without walls" among their peers.

> "Until I took my performance exam I didn't realize what was out there as far as other study groups and all the support that you could receive from other students. I gained just from meeting somebody at my first one. I started a contact with her and the next test I took I met some other people and I continued a contact with them."

> "...even through other continuing education offerings. This is a

means of peer support for your learning, not that they're in the same program necessarily."

And perhaps because the program is self-paced they cited the importance of finding a peer at the same level:

> "I remember talking to the girl next to me who was ready to do the performance exams, and I was just starting the written exams so I wasn't thinking that far ahead. She couldn't meet my need because she was really focusing on preparing for these exams and didn't want to talk about the other ones. She needed her need met and I needed my need met and they weren't the same thing."

Favorably received as an alternative classroom, the peer study groups provided by the College are designed to benefit more students than currently involved. To improve the groups and increase participation, some suggestions offered by students and graduates are to: involve recent graduates in the groups, highlight the groups' activities in a Study Group Newsletter, and have the groups host regional meetings.

And to facilitate networking other than through the groups: provide a list of people going for an exam; a list of hotels where people are staying, and possibly linking graduates to students.

Overall program graduates have done well on the required examinations, indicating the ability to acquire the needed learning in this non-instructional setting. The attendant stress, however is perhaps greater than would be experienced in a traditional setting, and bears further study.

Experience with these RNs has shown that despite, or perhaps because of, the diverse knowledge, experience and lifestyles they are well suited to the collaborative teaching/learning model of the Thomas Edison program. Without exception, they encourage, help and support each other; and, despite the stress they've experienced, recruit others into the program.

As attainment of the baccalaureate in nursing is an important goal for individual RNs as well as for the profession; finding ways to assist the thousands of associate degree and diploma graduates to achieve this goal not only contributes to the profession but to an adequate supply of well prepared nurses at all levels.

RNs in educational settings share the characteristics of RNs in the work force. What they seem to want in this academic setting, independence with peer involvement, parallels what they want in the workplace: autonomy with social integration (McCloskey[2]). The resourcefulness and active involvement contributing to the success for these RN students might be encouraged as well for students in other disciplines with common backgrounds and goals, particularly experienced practitioners in their fields (eg. policemen) for whom degree completion will require intensive testing.

As with the need for flexibility in work and academic schedules, RNs need flexibility in support systems. Given the options needed, they are seen to be resourceful learners as well as supportive peers.

> "For most of us being a student comes last-mother, father, worker primarily, but the connection is still there. We all found a way, I like to think."

Footnotes

[1] Baccalaureate Education in Nursing:Key to a Professional Career in Nursing 1989-1990, Council of Baccalaureate and Higher Degree Programs Division of Research (1989) NY. National League for Nursing.

[2] McCloskey, J.C. (1990) Two Requirements for Job Contentment: Autonomy and Social Integration. Image 22 140-143.

Note: Quotations throughout this paper are those either of graduates or students participating in discussions held as a follow-up to the surveys, or responses on the deans' questionnaires.

SHIFT HAPPENS:
NON-TRADITIONAL EDUCATION AND WOMEN'S ADULT DEVELOPMENT

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> **The journey [of development] does not take away our old experiences, as we often fear before we embark. It simply gives them new meaning . . . Nothing is different, yet all is transformed.**
> --*Laurent Daloz,*
> Effective Teaching and Mentoring

The background

Finishing my bachelor's degree in my late 30's was a key factor in transforming my life. Afterward, when I began working with re-entry learners, it became evident that my story was not unique. Many students informally reported changes in relationships, employment, and self-image which they attributed to their educational experiences. I decided to construct my dissertation research around a qualitative examination of the affects of adult learning on adult development.

The context

The Union Institute, formerly the Union for Experimenting College and Universities (UECU), was one of the originators of the "university without walls" model. Union's baccalaureate program, the College of Undergraduate Studies, is designed around the needs of adult learners and offers tutorial learning, experiential learning credit, and mentoring/advising. In consultation with their advisors and faculty, learners are also major architects of their learning agreements (syllabi) and degree plans (curricula). Union has historically attracted more women than men; the average student is 38.

The guiding questions

All past and present (as of a particular date) learners of Union's San Diego Center were sent a letter asking, a) for their participation in a research study, and b) if they would *identify ways in which your life has changed or you have grown which you feel are related to your experiences at UECU. Please describe those you consider most significant.* Based primarily on their written responses, 24 people were interviewed. Open-ended questions focused on their experiences of change and growth. Probe questions attempted to determine which aspects of the undergraduate program contributed most to this development.

A caveat

Both because Union has tended to attract more women than men, and because many more women than men identified "change/growth" as an outcome of their educational experiences, the study population comprised 18 women and 6 men. I will emphasize women's development and briefly touch on men's.

A story of transition and the model which illuminates it

Due to space constraints, I must limit the powerful and poignant voices of the learners whose responses informed my

> *no longer . . . just be wife and mother and friend and daughter and sister.*

The crisis which Birdie described is best explained by an adult development model proposed in *The Evolving Self: Problems and Process in Human Development* (Kegan, 1982). (*Women's Ways of Knowing* by Belenky and her colleages, 1986, also accurately reflected many of these women's stories.)

Kegan calls his model "a helix of evolutionary truces" because each stage represents a temporary equilibrium before resuming the inner struggle inherent in developing to the next. Positions 1, 3, and 5 are on the same side of the helix and are stages of development which favor inclusion; 2 and 4 are on the opposite side and favor independence. Throughout our lives we move back and forth between these poles, each time advancing beyond the perceptual limitations of our former position.

Positions 0, 1, and 2 are associated with childhood and adolescence. The most prevalent adult positions--3: "Interpersonal" and 4: "Institutional"--are the frame within which I will explore re-entry women's development.

Kegan defines each position in terms of what the person at that stage of development is subject to and what is object to him or her. More specifically, those of our behaviors and understandings which we cannot question, in which we are "embedded," are those to which we are *subject*. They become *object* when we gain "perspective," when, for example, we can choose particular responses and behaviors rather than having it seem to us there is no option. Our subject/object stance is also related to how we make meaning. Our ability to construct reality is a function of our development; at the same time, as we make meaning, meaning makes us. Our identity, our self-definition, is a function of our level of development.

According to Kegan, the Interpersonal (level 3) woman is "unable to declare a sense of self separate from the relational context" (p. 97). In other words, being someone's wife or mother (or daughter, sister, friend, secretary, or student) is not *part* of her self-definition; it is her self-definition. It is not that she is *herself* and takes on various *roles* in her life--rather herself *does not exist* apart from those roles. For this person, her relationships are her identity; they are "*required to bring the self into being*" (p. 97, original emphasis).

Birdie and other women like her have been defined by their relationships; in fact, without those relationships, in an important sense such women cease to exist (hence, e.g., the "empty nest" crisis). But the Birdie who decided she had to return to school was growing beyond that stage. And although at the time she could describe the impetus only as a need to be "somebody," it seems clear that being *somebody* implied an identity of her own, and not merely a reflection of others' definitions of her.

This self-definition-by-other is not a function of class, nor is it age-specific, nor is it confined to women of limited education. In her moving "journal of self-discovery," *An Unknown Woman*, Alice Koller (1983), who had at the time of writing recently completed the Ph.D. in Philosophy from Radcliffe, said "I have turned other people into mirrors for me. I look at other people in order to see myself" (p. 69) and "I seem to believe there is no Me except in other eyes. I am what I see in your eyes, whoever you are" (p. 94).

The development of a self-defined rather than an other-defined, reflected self may be described as establishing *her own* identity. In the absence of such a sense of identity, according to Josselson (1987), a woman feels "at the mercy of the parts of the self, impulses, memories, and traits that do not add up or feel coherently connected to a core self" (p. 11).

But in order to achieve this developmental progress, in order to establish and declare a new, more authoritative, more self-defined self, she must give up the one which she has. The metaphor of this growth is not, however, building a second storey on a house--which leaves the old structure intact. A more accurate image is a metamorphosis in which the structure of the old dissolves to recreate the new. Here is Birdie's description of the circumstances which immediately preceded her return to school:

> *I had filed for divorce from my husband [after we] had been married for 17 years. [Then I] quit a job that I really loved and we sort of reconciled . . . We made a major move from Connecticut to California . . . an area I didn't want to be in . . . I lost total control of myself. I didn't know who I was, what I wanted, where I wanted to be . . . I almost couldn't even go in and take a shower in the morning without forgetting what I was supposed to do next.*

This is someone experiencing vertigo at the edge of the interpersonal universe. For a self which is defined by its relationships, the threat of the loss of those relationships (either her husband or the close friends she worked with) "can be experienced as the threat of the loss of the self itself" (Kegan, 1982, p. 207). It is hardly surprising, then, that she felt a disorientation so great she could not remember from one minute to the next what she was supposed to do--or perhaps, who she was supposed to be.

Birdie's self-description is reminiscent of Clare's, a young woman quoted by Carol Gilligan (1982) in *In A Different Voice*:

> "For an entire weekend I didn't get out of bed because there was no reason to. I just couldn't bring myself to get out of bed. I didn't know what I would do if I got out of bed, but most of my sophomore year was like that. I didn't know what I was doing, what the reason for doing anything was. Nothing seemed to connect together." (p. 56)

Although Clare, a traditional-aged sophomore, is much younger than Birdie, there are similarities in their circumstances. Clare has been in a relationship which no longer adequately defines her. Both women are pulling away from (growing beyond) the expectations of the people they are closest to; both also feel guilt and unease about this. Neither wishes to completely abandon--nor be abandoned by--those whom they love, but the relationships which have until now defined them are no longer adequate definitions. Birdie experiences this as

> *a time of total confusion . . . a time of rejection of all values, morals, ideas, philosophies, religion, everything. How could all these people be so right and it makes me feel so wrong . . . Why did I lose it? What had I done so wrong to have totally lost my entire sense of being?* [my emphasis]

Although she perceived herself as rejecting all "values, morals" and so on, in actuality, she was rejecting only her *former relationship* to them. She will not abandon her family; on the contrary, she acknowledged "I will be a mother until the day I die." She was nevertheless shifting from her self-definition as a wife and mother, to a self-definition which incorporated her *roles* as a wife and mother, and in which she, herself, was a "somebody." Birdie-who-has been (stage 3) is responsible to everyone else; Birdie-who-is-becoming (stage 4) will also be responsible to herself. However, her former sense of being had not yet completed its metamorphosis--therefore the feeling that it (she) was lost.

At some point in the process of transformation, of developmental change, there is a place *between*, when one is clearly beyond the old, but has not yet fully arrived at the new. This is the place of *transition*. (This is the setting for Alice Koller's *An Unknown Woman*.) Part of the pain and confusion of transition, then, is that we must give up one identity in order to gain another, but we have no certainty that having given up what we know, and in a fundamental sense who we are, we will once again be able to pull together the pieces of ourselves and re-establish a coherent personality. The experience of letting go of one's self-identification is like stepping off the edge of that universe into the unknown. (Although I have never parachuted out of a plane, I have experienced adult transformation. I imagine, at a metaphysical level, the experiences are similar. It takes a lot of courage to step out of a perfectly good airplane into the empty sky.)

Birdie is an example of those women whose lives were clearly in upheaval *before* they came back to school. Other women began to experience similar disorientation *shortly after* they re-entered. (A few women--perhaps those who had already resolved these identity issues--did not fall in either category.) Apparently, certain aspects of this educational process support the self re-creation and re-definition which enabled these women to explore what Josselson calls *sense of identity*, and Alice Koller describes as "uncovering my own authority" (p. 256).

The findings

In these interviews, two major themes, both of which have been previously explored and developed by noted educators, emerged as highly significant to these women during their transitional process: "teaching as care" (Daloz, 1987) and "self-directed learning" (Knowles, 1975, 1980, 1984). Both of these will be briefly examined here from a developmental perspective.

Teaching as care

According to Kegan (1982), a major factor in development is a "culture of embeddedness": the environment within which we grow. It is not only a physical environment of place and time, but also a human environment: those who interact with us as we exist and change. This culture must perform three functions in order that we transform and grow as we should: "It must hold on. It must let go. And it must stick around so that it can be reintegrated" (p. 121).

In *Effective Teaching and Mentoring*, Daloz (1987) similarly defines the responsibilities of a mentor to include:

> The activity of holding, of providing a place where the student can contact her need for fundamental trust, the basis of growth. It means moving to confirm the student's sense of worth and helping her to see that *she is both OK where she is and capable of moving ahead* [italics added] when she chooses. (p. 215)

As we have heard from Birdie's (and Clare's) stories, the process of shifting to a new level of development can be a profoundly troubling, sometimes frightening, experience. A woman must let go of her old, familiar way of being for something which she has a glimpse of, but which she is not yet sure is completely real, or that she can achieve it. Kegan (1982) has described various clinical depressions which are associated with the transition process; Alice Koller (1983) seriously evaluated the option of suicide.

For these re-entry women, most of whose lives involve caring for others, the caring concern of someone for them appears to have been a major impetus for a change in their self-perceptions. In *Composing a Life*, Mary Catherine Bateson (1990) speaks to women's needs to be provided as well as providers of care:

> It is not easy to learn to cherish oneself when one's life has been organized around cherishing others . . . . [Self-care] is intimately tied to self-esteem, with the implication that the one who is cherished is important and valuable for his or her own sake.

And self-care appears to be involved in the development from Kegan's Interpersonal to Institutional stages: as we (or others) care for ourselves, we bring those selves into being; and as our sense of self develops, we discover that our self is among those for whom it is proper to care. In the absence of sufficient care, the difficult and demanding process of development may become almost unbearable.

In addition to care, support, and permission to be where we are developmentally, we also need encouragement and permission to move beyond where we are. The young child who repeatedly climbs on and off her mother's lap is an example of someone needing both holding on and letting go. She wants to be assured of the safety and permanence of that support; however as soon as she has that assurance, she feels secure enough to venture beyond it, at least for a little while.

Parents who have resolved some of their own issues around needing and being needed will not demand the child "sit still" and remain held. They will gently urge the child to explore beyond the confines of absolute safety. Several women described the importance to them of receiving this kind of supportive challenge from their advisors.

Patty, for example, despite her evident (to everyone else) intellectual gifts and her impressive professional accomplishments, deep down had always believed her father's assessment that she was stupid. Her first quarter of re-entry was touch-and-go in terms of staying in school. She alternated between exhilaration every time she received positive feedback on an assignment, and fear that *next* time she would surely fail. As she reflected on those experiences, Patty felt what had kept her going during that period of agonizing self-doubt was that her advisor and I

> *understood my neurotic love-dance and didn't let me shuffle off to Buffalo.* [Laughter.] *It was like, as I was heading for the door, Sandy and you slammed it shut, stood there with your arms locked and said,* [laughter] *"You're not leaving."* [I don't remember that incident.] *Emotionally, emotionally, that's [the message] I got. It [was as if you said to me], "You made an agreement to do this and you're gonna do it. And I know you can. And it's ok to be scared . . .*

The final function of Kegan's culture of embeddedness, "sticking around to be re-integrated," is achieved when the learner takes on (or in) the power to evaluate and validate her own learning. This development may derive, in part, from the capacity for self-care which is learned (internalized) if one is *adequately cared for*. "If learning is about growth and growth requires trust, then teaching is about engendering trust, about nurturance--caring for growth" (Daloz, p. 237). Her learning becomes a self-perpetuating process, rather than one which depends on others' recognition and intervention; she also acknowledges her capacity for continued growth.

Self-directed learning

What is it about conscious self-direction that enables re-entry women such as Birdie to transform and re-establish their identities? Paradoxically, the process of directing the self also creates the self who is being directed. What is even more paradoxical, of course, is that most adults (especially those who seek to re-enter education) are *already* self-directed and have impressive histories of successful responsiblity in their family and work lives.

But despite this, many re-entry women are often unsure of their abilities. Although they may have accomplished various impressive things in non-academic settings, at some essential level, they have not internalized (Kegan might say "reintegrated") the fact that they are the authors of their own success. Knowles (1973) emphasizes the importance to development of "the point at which an individual achieves a *self-concept* [italics added] of essential self-direction" (p. 45). It is less the fact that the person *becomes* self-directed, than that she *recognizes and validates* her capacity for self-direction.

Martha said, "*this* school [her emphasis] has been the vehicle for me to say 'yeah, I can acknowledge my own responsibility to my own life.'" As she saw it:

> *It's that change from the idea of becoming self-reliant to experiencing an educational system that really teaches that. . .* [What about the system teaches that?] *That you are designing your own program that you're responsible for--it's not some counselor scratching it all on a little piece of paper and handing it to you . . . It's that I am putting together the classes that will make my education meaningful. I'm responsible for how much meaning I get out of it. It's just so different to assume the responsibility.*

She is describing one aspect of this program's requirement for self-direction, the Degree Plan, which is clearly different from merely choosing courses from an established catalog. Each learner's Degree Plan is an individualized curriculum created by her, based on her own history, and designed to fulfill her unique needs. At the same time, it must meet the institution's requirement for breadth of learning by establishing connections between her personal goals and the society of which she is part.

In determining the courses which will make up her degree, a learner must also specify which prior non-classroom learning experiences she will document and submit to be evaluated for college credit. And she must create an Area of Concentration which represents her bridge to her desired future. Therefore, in order to design this Plan, she must first assess her past experiences and then focus on her future intentions.

Josselson (1987) calls for just such activity in creating a woman's identity: "a dynamic fitting together of parts of the personality with the realities of the social world so that a person has a sense both of internal coherence and meaningful relatedness to the real world" (p. 12-13). This process also echoes Miller's observation that for a woman to become self-determining, she must be able to answer the questions: "What do I want? Who am I anyhow?" (1976, p. 96); or, as Alice Koller says, to "learn how to see with my own eyes" (1983, p. 94).

Josselson also says "We know nothing about [a woman's] identity unless we know where these pieces fit in the overall picture *she creates*" [italics added] (p. 12). As a learner creates her Degree Plan she of necessity creates a picture of her identity, her *self*. As she considers the courses which make up the Plan, she must ask herself: *Why am I including this? How does this fit in with my picture of my whole program or my vision of myself or the self I would like to become?* No one can make these decisions for her; and for her to make them for herself she must pay attention to and develop that self. In addition, since most women are in the habit of attending first and foremost to everyone else's needs, the mere fact that she is attending to herself--her needs, desires, wants, and dreams--is a significant and important statement of herself; this echoes Bateson's observations about self-care and self-esteem.

Elizabeth related designing her Learning Agreements (course outlines) to her sense of growth:

> *I know [these developmental changes] would not have happened if I was going to another kind of institution because [here] you have to keep turning back to yourself . . . . I don't see how anyone can do [this without] . . . finding out who the hell they are . . . [Because] every time you sit down to write a learning agreement you have to say "what do I want to learn out of this? What's valid? What is it that I need to know so I can do the work I want to do?"*

But self-direction in the context of this undergraduate program is more than creating a Degree Plan and the individual Learning Agreements within it. It also involves consulting and negotiating with each professor about the materials which will be read, learning experiences which will be undertaken, and documentation of learning which will be turned in at the end of each course. It may also involve going out into the community to find faculty who possess the particular combination of experience and education which best fits the learner's needs.

In addition, women in a self-directed setting cannot escape the awareness that *they* are doing it. They are ultimately responsible for their success. Julia felt that most important to her increased self-esteem was

> *just the doing it, just taking [the faculty's] advice, just taking these books home and doing it, not expecting somebody else to [do it for me] . . . But*

> *just to go through and hang in until I got it. That was fun. That made me feel confident. [In a traditional college program] someone else gave it to me. They had done all the thinking. I didn't have to learn to think; I could memorize.*

In this instance, the requirement for self-direction has contributed to Julia's experiencing the power of her own mind. For many women, discovering their own minds seems to be intimately connected with discovering their selves. (This relationship is closely examined by Belenky and her colleagues in *Women's Ways of Knowing: Development of Self, Voice, and Mind*, 1986.)

A tentative comparison

Methodological concerns suggest that any comparison between men and women in this study should be made very cautiously: the proportion of men to women was skewed, the routes of their respective life-journeys were dissimilar (e.g. most of the men were single; most of the women were married or divorced), and 4 out of the 6 men were in their late 20s whereas the women were in their late 30s--a noteworthy difference, particularly when we are examining issues of adult development.

Also, judging from their self-descriptions, the men in this study were either less affected by this program than were the women, or less forthcoming in their descriptions of change. This raises intriguing questions, among them whether I, as a former re-entry woman, was a better (more sensitive, intuitive, and empathetic) interviewer for women. It also seemed, in reviewing the transcripts, that the women had done considerable self-reflection *before* the interview; the men seemed to be engaging in self-reflection as a *result* of the interview.

However, having given those cautions, I will venture a limited comparison. The women tended to describe the changes they experienced in terms of a sense of *rebirth*, or becoming *a different person*; the men's responses most often focused on *completion* and finally *having a degree*. For example: "learning that I could finish something, accomplish something;" "I was . . . seeing me finish things;" "I was finally doing something I needed to do;" "I was going to complete this" were four different men's descriptions of significant program-related change.

Granted that the data do not support a firm comparison, there is nevertheless theoretical evidence to support this apparent difference. Think, for a moment, about how we view the roles of "hero" and "heroine." The hero is the focal point of his story; he faces difficulties, endures the possibility of failure, but usually succeeds in the end in rescuing the maiden/capturing the jewel/discovering the secret/upsetting the evildoers. Often he is rewarded with someone's daughter's hand in marriage, as well as with riches, power, and good fortune. The *heroine*, by comparison, is usually the *rescuee* (or hers is the hand that gets passed around)! She is not the center of the story in which she appears, *he* is! Men (the "heros") are *supposed* to go out and slay dragons; women (until recently, the "heroines") are rarely issued their own suits of armor. (Of course, as Elizabeth Minnich has pointed out, in a transformed society, we would define heroism to include what have been deemed "women's virtues"--the ethic of care would be as valued as winning a battle.)

Accomplishing this challenging transformation--development of a self-defined identity, "voice," and authority--may be likened to slaying dragons, or some other difficult task which, when accomplished, promises great reward. When the dragons are overcome--when a woman acknowledges her own power--it is hardly surprising that she would speak in terms of major change and a complete shift in her sense of self--the "old me" and the "new me." Given our society's expectation that men are assertive and authoritive, if they develop (or further develop) these characteristics, they may not feel so great a disparity as do the women between who they have been and who they are becoming.

Summary

In "Women's Educational Needs," Jesse Barnard suggests that traditional college programs "have permitted, even called for, developmental arrest" in women (1981, p. 261). From their earliest years, women (girls) make "good" students. They are more likely than boys to pay attention and do "what the teacher wants." It is not surprising, then, that adult women have the reputation of being among the "best" students in colleges--perhaps because they slip easily into the role of seeking out and then fulfilling an authority figure's requirements. It is as though, in a traditional classroom, an Interpersonal woman can simply add "student" to her self-definition-by-other--in this case, by a professor.

This culturally-validated behavior (and level of development) is challenged in an environment which requires self-definition, and which provides caring, nurturing support during that process.

Generally, the men in this study did not describe change in the same terms the women used. Where women's self-descriptions often mentioned a new sense of self, men tended to describe a sense of completion as among their most significant outcomes.

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Factors in Adult Students Not Persisting in a Non-traditional Undergraduate Program

Prof. Diane Ganiere
Graduate Judy DeBusk
Graduate Eva Talbert
Adult Degree Program, Mary Baldwin College

The success of an adult degree program is ultimately measured by the individual successes of its participants (Langenbach, 1988). While there is one school of thought holding that adults should be able to drop in and out of college, it is our perception that most adults who enter our program do so with the intention of completing their degree. Given that the ultimate goal of adult education is to maintain and improve the quality of life, and adult degree programs function as a "second chance" (Cross, 1981), we agree with Verner (1964) that "stopping out" or "dropping out" not only represents a disappointment to the adults who did not meet their objectives, but also represents a considerable social loss.

The purpose of this study was to discern the main factors involved in adult students "stopping out" or not persisting in our program. From previous research we learned that non-persisters in a program such as ours tend to have no financial aid, be part- time (Weidman, 1985), young, single adults without a previous history of adult education (Long, 1983), with a longer recent time span away from school (Verner, 1964), with low reading levels (Smith, 1970), no career commitment plan (Garrison, 1985), and a history of frequent job changes (Sainty, 1971). Sainty summarizes his results as a "non-success" syndrome. He states that there is a correlation between dropping out of adult education and previous failures in many other areas. In support of this, Weidman (1985) reports that program completion has been related to the academic aptitude and the ability of the student to "connect" with both academic and non-academic sectors. In line with these "personality" factors, Garrison (1985) found that drop-outs had lower self-confidence, as well as unrealistic goals for themselves and unrealistic expectation of their courses and programs, all of which resulted in dropping out when the reality of the academic demands were realized. The most powerful predictor of persistence in adult education was satisfaction with the learning activity in terms of its ability to meet the student's own objectives.

Although a number of studies list academic achievement and grades in general as important factors in persistence, research pertaining to grade point average is inconsistent. In the Verner review (1964) and Garrison report (1985) lower grades were related to dropping out. But Astin (1975) shows poor grades as only the fourth most commonly cited cause, and Langenbach (1988) reported that there was no significant difference between the undergraduate GPA of persisters vs. non-persisters. This question is of particular interest since adult non-persisters seem to stop-out due, frequently, to adverse circumstances which cause a flurry of sudden, atypical "F's". We find no evidence that this was taken into account in previous research. If we find that non-persister's GPA's are lower, there are a number of factors that could play a part of that observation: lower GPA's and fewer accumulated semester hours prior to admission to the program, difficulty of "major" area of study chosen, differences in mode of learning engaged, i.e., independent tutorial vs. "on-campus" class, and differences in motivation for returning to school, i.e., personal enrichment vs. career change or advancement.

Boshier (1973) has commented that when students themselves are asked to classify reasons for their dropping out, they tend to rationalize away the fact that they could not learn. In conjunction with this, the American College

Testing Program reported that only 5% of the students who responded to a study of theirs mentioned insufficient academic progress as a reason for their dropping out (Levitz, 1980). In an attempt to circumvent this problem, we drew our evaluation from files and advisors as well as from the stop-outs themselves.

Method

Subjects

Subjects were the 104 (91 women, 13 men) students who graduated in June 1990 and the 99 (74 women, 25 men) students who stopped out of the program between July 1, 1989 and June 30, 1990. Twelve advisors also responded to our letter requesting reasons for students' stopping out. The official ratio of advisees to faculty advisor in our program is 40/1, with the actual range being from approximately 20/1 to 60/1; there is usually enough communication between faculty advisor and advisee to warrant asking the advisor for an assessment of why a student stopped out.

Materials and Procedures

Data was drawn from institutional records, surveys returned by 85 graduates and 50 stop-outs, and the written assessment of each stop-out's advisor.

Relative to GPA, because of the special circumstances under which adult degree program students take classes, they are eligible for an "ET", referring to "extended time" following an independent tutorial they are unable to complete within a semester. The college issues "administrative F's" when extended time exceeds twelve months or two transcripting periods. As mentioned earlier, the ET's, and subsequent F's, may be as much a reflection of personal crises such as a sick family member as they are a reflection of low academic achievement. Based on this rationale, the stop-outs' GPA was recorded as calculated by the registrar's office, including administrative F's, and then recalculated, dropping them.

A random sample of 20 stop-outs' and 20 graduates' files were drawn to compute the students' GPA's prior to acceptance into the program. Credit hours and quality points from all previously attended schools were used in the computation of the data.

The twelve advisors of the 99 stop-outs were sent a letter asking them to describe as best they could the reasons for each student's stopping out. (See Appendix A.)

A questionnaire was sent to each graduate and stop-out, with a stamped envelope for return, asking them to circle the reason they entered the Adult Degree Program, and the reasons contributing to their graduation or stopping out. (See Appendix B.) One follow-up mailing was done. The answers to questions #1 and #8 have been analyzed for this report.

Hypotheses

1. There would be a difference between graduates' and stop-outs'
    a) GPA's as reported by the registrar;
    b) GPA's when calculated without administrative F's;
    c) GPA's before entering;
    d) accumulated semester hours before enrolling;
    e) age;
    f) types of "major" undertaken;
    g) reasons for enrolling.

2. There would be a difference between students' and advisors' assessment of reasons for stop-outs' not persisting.

Results

The GPA of the 104 graduates ($M = 3.50$) was significantly greater than that of the 99 students who stopped out ($M = 2.93$) even when the latter GPA had been expunged of administrative F's. $t(125) = 4.56$, $p \le .0001$. The unpooled formula was used since the standard deviation were .442 and 1.15, respectively, resulting in an F of 6.75, $p \le .0001$. The stop-outs' GPA with administrative F's expunged was significantly greater than the GPA as it had been calculated by the registrar ($M = 2.05$, SD = 1.19), $t(196) = 5.34$, $p \le .001$. The correlation between these scores was .74, and when the scores were subjected to a t for correlated data, the $t = 28.42$, $p \le .0001$.

It should be noted that the stop-out sample GPA included grades of six students who began the program but did nothing, and so contributed GPA's of 0. They can be considered atypical of the group as a whole, but since they probably represent a certain small percentage of every entering class, their data were left in.

Calculations done on the twenty randomly drawn stop-outs and twenty graduates' GPA's prior to enrollment revealed that the stop-outs had entered with a significantly lower GPA ($M = 2.77$) than those who had persisted ($M = 3.13$), $t(38) = 2.06$, $p = .023$, (tabled $t(38) = 1.68$, $p \le .05$).

Further comparison of all the files indicated that the stop-outs entered with 70 s.h. as compared to graduates' 77 (N.S.) Stop-outs and graduates were almost the same age, 35 and 36 respectively, and they took approximately the same majors. Of the 104 graduates, 36 listed business as their likely major. Psychology and sociology were the second and third most frequently mentioned majors. For stop-outs, 41 named business as their likely major, with psychology and sociology as the second and third most common majors. Stop-psychology and sociology as the second and third most common majors. Stop-outs took a significantly smaller percentage of on-campus courses ($M = 25.4$) than graduates ($M = 34.0$), $t(183) = -2.26$, $p \leq .05$. (Tabled $t = -1.64$, $p \leq .05$.)

The questionnaire was responded to by 50% of the stop-outs and 82% of the graduates. 68% of the stop-outs' reasons for entering the program were related to occupation, 31% to personal enrichment, as compared to graduates' 61% and 38%, respectively. There was no significant difference between the stop-outs and graduates.

The letters sent to advisors received a 100% response. The comparison between their assessments and the students' assessments as to why the students stopped out can be seen in Table 1.

Of the 99 students assessed, the advisors predicted that nineteen would return to the program in the near future, and, in fact, eight are back.

In summary, eighty percent of the reasons for stoppping out listed by students themselves were other than academic; advisors were in general agreement: personal and financial concerns and job responsibilities headed the list. Of seven factors investigated, significant differences between stop-outs and graduates appeared, 1) in the area of GPA, both before and during enrollment in the program, and 2) in numbers of independent studies taken: stop-outs had lower GPA's and took more independent studies.

Discussion

Academic difficulties and failures are causes of adult student dropout in post-secondary education, but some researchers feel that they are not the most common causes, but frequently symptoms of other underlying problems. We wanted to look at both the academic and underlying factors associated with students dropping out of our program.

When asked to give reasons for stopping out, both students and advisors listed academic achievement as fourth on the list, following personal and financial concerns and job responsibilities, in that order.

Beyond keeping an eye open for any extra sources of funding for our students, is there anything we can do about "personal concerns" or "job responsibilities"? One possible strategy might be to explicitly warn students, when we sense problems in this area, that personal and job responsibilities cannot be under-rated in the energy they demand, and are the main reasons given by students themselves for stopping out. This might help students be more realistic about the work they are undertaking. Verner (1964) states that adults enroll in educational activities in response to an internal need to achieve some personal objective that may or may not be perceived clearly. The failure to achieve that objective is due to a number of factors that lie in the nature of the student and the objective as well as the character of the educational opportunities available. For students who are already in the program, we might help them articulate, periodically, the match between their expectations and goals, the reality they are meeting with their schooling, and how they might better cope and adjust to these realities. This information would give the system tips as to how to improve the educational experience from the students' perspectives.

Another implication of our findings is that lack of academic achievement is not a negligible factor in the decision to stop out. Howe (1977) found motivation to be the single most important variable relating to academic success. The relationship between academic achievement and motivation is an important factor for academic advisors to consider when counseling the adult student; our survey of advisors was an attempt to get a more objective account of students reasons for stopping out than they themselves could be expected to provide, but even advisors tend not to express students' stopping out in terms of causes related to their lack of academic achievement. Are we being unrealistic in underrating the importance of grades? Academic achievement appears to be an important motivational factor in adult student persistence; if the institution is concerned with graduating students, all personnel - along with the students themselves - should take pains to arrange for student success. And, based on our observations, this might include suggesting that at-risk students take as many on-campus courses as possible.

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Table 1.

Factors in stopping-out listed by students vs. advisors.

Students (50% response rate)	Advisors (100% response rate)
Personal concerns: 36%	Personal concerns: 46%
Health: 5%	Health: 10%
New baby: 10%	Pregnancy: 9%
New marriage: 4%	Romantic distraction: 6%
Family problems: 8%	Personal problems: 21%
Move: 7%	
Personal business: 2%	
Financial concerns: 25%	Financial concerns: 13%
Academic problems: 20%	Academic problems: 10%
Time, self-discipline: 9%	Time management: 2%
Burn-out: 3%	Lack of motivation: 3%
College requirements: 6%	Academic problems: 5%
Need more classroom: 1%	
Undecided on major: 1%	
Job responsibilities: 15%	Job responsibilities: 21%
Distance from college: 4%	Distance from college: 9%
Lack of communication with advisor: 3%	Distance from MBC: 8% Alternative education: .5%
Local college: 1%	Hometown college: .5%

Appendix A

July 26, 1990

Professor Ann Alexander
Mary Baldwin College
Roanoke Center
Suite 309
920 South Jefferson Street
Roanoke, VA 24016

Dear Professor Alexander:

It is inevitable in an adult degree program such as Mary Baldwin's that a certain number of students decide to stop out. The purpose of my senior project is to contribute to a better understanding of stop-outs and the improvement of the program. I am limiting my study to students who have stopped out between the dates of July 1, 1989 and June 30, 1990. Since this sample is fairly current, I am hoping their cases will be fresh on your mind.

Enclosed is a list of your advisees who stopped out during the time period mentioned. It would be of great assistance to me if you could write a one line (or more) assessment of why each of these students stopped out. A copy of the results of this study will be sent to you.

I appreciate your time and cooperation.

Very truly,

Judy DeBusk
(Project advisor: Dr. Ganiere)

Appendix B

MARY BALDWIN
COLLEGE
STAUNTON, VIRGINIA

July 28, 1990

Dear Recent ADP Student,

Please take a minute to answer the following questions. Your answers will be used to improve the program. Your anonymity will be protected.

1. The main reason I entered the ADP was:
    a. personal enrichment
    b. career entry
    c. occupational advancement
    d. occupational change
2. ____ years elapsed between my last college experience and entry into ADP.
3. I worked ____ hours per week outside my home while enrolled in ADP.
4. I earned approximately ____ credit hours prior to entry into ADP.
5. In the past two years I have become a parent: Yes No
6. In the past two years my marital status has changed: Yes No
7. In the past two years I have changed residence:
    a. not at all
    b. once
    c. twice or more
8. Those three conditions or circumstances that most greatly contributed to my decision to stop out of the program were:
    a.
    b.
    c.
9. Please send me the results of this questionnaire: Yes No

(If you answered "Yes", include your name and address here or send a separate note to that effect.)

Thank-you for your cooperation.
Diane Ganiere
Diane Ganiere, ADP Faculty Advisor

Mary Baldwin College • Staunton, Virginia 24401 • (703) 887-7000

Track B

Faculty Development/Faculty Roles

'And Gladly Would (S)he Learn, and Gladly Teach': Ideal Faculty for Adult Learners

Susanne Dumbleton, Dean of Liberal Arts
Regents College

More than 600 years ago, in the time and space we have come simplistically to call Merry England, Geoffrey Chaucer was at work on what was to become one of the world's most beloved portrayals of human existence--The Canterbury Tales. As you may recall from high school or college studies, this series of linked stories opens with a description of thirty-one men and women who meet by chance one night in an inn on the way to the shrine of Thomas Becket at Canterbury Cathedral. With the encouragement of the inn's voluble host, they decide to journey together and pass the time by telling two stories each on the voyage and two on the return trip. The teller of the best tales--that is, those which are most amusing and instructive--will be treated to food and lodging at the same Tabard Inn at journey's end.

In the description and the tales that follow, Chaucer displays his admiration of human strength as well as his loving awareness of human folly. Under his scrutiny, each pilgrim is seen as a balanced blend of altruistic and selfish intentions, honest self-awareness and concealed hypocrisy, real accomplishment and bogus pretense. His sharp, though affectionate, criticism touches all save three pilgrims--the skilled and steadfast knight, the benign and diligent country parson, and (of greatest interest to educators) the humble and studious Oxford scholar.

> A Clerk there was of Oxenford also,
> Who into Logic had gone quite long ago.
>
> And as lean was his horse as is a rake
> And he was not right fat, I undertake,
>
> And threadbare was his clothing and his coat, . . .
> For he would rather have at his bed's head
> Twenty books clad in black and red . . .
> Than rich robes or expensive instruments . . . .
>
> Of study took he most care and heed
> Nor spoke he one word more than was his need
> And what he said was in both form and seeming
> Short and quick and full of solid meaning.
> Touching on moral virtue always was his speech,
> And gladly would he learn, and gladly teach.

This lone professor, I would suggest, offers a medieval image of the ideal modern continuing education faculty member--knowledgeable and thoughtful, ethical and articulate, humble and generous of spirit, committed to students and dedicated to learning, and, last but not least, unconcerned about status and the trappings of material gain.

Regents College is privileged to have in its ranks a number of such admirable faculty, men and women who gladly learn from and gladly teach the nontraditional adult student. It is interesting to analyze the components of their success as a means of understanding the qualities we should seek in recruiting faculty, the activities we should sponsor to support their efforts, the methods we should employ to assess their performance, and the approaches we should consider in recognizing their accomplishments.

Regents College faculty are an interesting cohort to analyze in this regard for a variety of reasons. First, because the college is dedicated exclusively to the adult learner, the Continuing Education faculty are the only faculty. They are, therefore, free from the time- and energy-consuming task of explaining and defending their roles. They receive high regard from students and colleagues and need not fight for status or place.

Second, because the college is a free-standing external degree institution (under the aegis of the University of the State of New York) the faculty focus exclusively on issues of the conceptual whole--defining mission, articulating policy, establishing curriculum, and assessing student outcomes. As they teach at other institutions, but not at Regents College, they do not have conflicting allegiance to an academic department.

Third, because the college has as part of its mission to serve as a force for change in higher education, faculty have the opportunity to work closely with the administration to sustain the visionary/experimental nature of the institution. Fourth, because the mission of the college is to provide equity and access to those otherwise excluded from higher education, Regents College faculty must sustain a complex and delicate blend of rigor and openness: they must insist on standards while ensuring that those standards focus on what a student knows rather than on the process by which he or she acquired the knowledge.

Fifth, because in some instances individual faculty represent an academic discipline, they must be current, engaged, and sufficiently reflective to understand and articulate with equanimity the perspectives of vying cohorts within the field. In sum, Regents College, like all continuing education divisions, requires that those who serve as faculty must bring to the college an intuitive as well as informed sense of higher education and an acceptance of the centrality and intricacy of their role within that realm.

Theirs is not an easy task, especially in the present climate of contention. Indeed, Chaucer's scholar would, I suspect, cast a cold eye on contemporary higher education where inordinate energy fuels vituperous debate between canonists and revisionists, between "pedagogists" and "androgogoists," between self-serving elitist "Guardians of the Tower" and libertine Advocates of Awarding Credits for time served on the planet. Chaucer's student of Logic would surely perceive the debate as skewed in focus. Further, he would be dismayed by education's intractable infrastructures and curricular labyrinths. He would resist the temptation to flaunt his learning and advance his own benefice. He would choose instead to cut to the quick--to argue dispassionately and sparingly that decisions should always advance the benefit of students and learning.

Regents College seeks in its faculty similarly informed, reasonable, "Logical" responsiveness in their role as custodians of Policy, Curriculum, and Assessment of Student Outcomes. Among the faculty we are pleased to number many such reasonable, "Logical" folk. Let me give some examples in each area, drawn from experience this year.

In the area of policy, Regents College had initially refused transfer credit to a student who had attended a program at a regionally accredited college as a nonmatriculating adult learner. She had participated fully in the course, attending all classes, completing all assignments, and taking all examinations. We refused credit because the student had been non-matriculating, and the college had reported the student's work on letterhead, not a transcript. We insist, as do all AACROA-guided institutions, on official documentation. The student petitioned. The offering institution, in order to issue a transcript, insisted that the student enroll, pay a full semester's tuition (this on top of the fee she had paid for the program), and wait one semester. There was no appeal to this process. The college confirmed with me by telephone that the student had completed the work satisfactorily and assured me that if the student were to enroll in a degree program with them, she could use the credit toward a degree. As dean, I brought the petition to the faculty. Faculty voted to accept the credit if the college reporting the scores could indeed provide an authentic document, including credit hours, letter grades, and course analogs, and verify in writing that the student would earn those credits toward the degree if she were to enroll. The college complied, and Regents College faculty accepted the credit. This, it seems to me, is a Reasonable faculty for adult students, concerned that policy assure both access and standards, and willing to stand behind policy which enables individuals to surmount barriers which have form but no substance.

In the area of curriculum too, Regents College faculty acted in a model way. Members of curriculum committees for all programs--Business, Liberal Arts, Nursing, and Technology--had grown concerned with the need to encourage a world view not limited to Eurocentric knowledge and issues. They wanted students to engage in study of both Western and non-Western culture. At the same time they realized that many adults who come to Regents College have begun their studies in the 60s and 70s, before the emergence of curricula of inclusion. Often these students have completed study of basic humanities and social science requirements and need to focus on upper level professional or major requirements in which these issues are absent. Moreover, many students are working independently through correspondence courses or in preparation for competency examinations. Others are taking courses at institutions which have not yet created non-Western curricular offerings. In a reasonable approach, faculty this year voted to urge students to choose study of non-Western culture wherever possible. To assist in this, the college is developing a database of courses in non-Western Culture available through distance delivery and is also considering examination options in these areas. Included will be study at the upper level, some with professional or major applications. Not until those support mechanisms are in place, however, will the faculty, with their concern for access, consider turning the recommendation into a requirement.

In the Assessment of Individual Students Outcomes, faculty have also acted Logically to balance access with excellence. For example, last summer a student enrolled in a flexible Liberal Studies option requested that faculty review his records to see if he would qualify for a degree with a physics concentration. He had been accepted into a physics PhD program, and his admission there would be facilitated by a degree which said "Physics." Faculty agreed to review his work. The student's educational record was a wonder to behold. He had begun study of engineering, moved to aeronautical science and then worked in the aerospace industry at various sites. He had then returned to college, taking higher level aeronautics, astrophysics, astronomy and engineering courses at colleges where he was stationed. A Regents College faculty member examined the sequence of courses the student had amassed. On paper they differed markedly from the traditional curriculum, which requires general physics, electricity and magnetism, classical mechanics, atomic or modern physics, and upper level electives. In his review, however, the faculty member focused on knowledge, not course titles and numbers. He recognized, for example, that the student could not have succeeded in higher level astrophysics without having mastered the principles of magnetism; he could not have passed two semesters electrical circuits and systems on the upper level without introductory and intermediate level knowledge of electricity, and so on. The faculty member concluded, after careful consideration, that the student knew all that a graduate of a traditional program would know--and then some. The student earned his degree in physics and is happily pursuing graduate work in the field without having to backtrack unnecessarily.

In searching for faculty, then, to sustain the tension between access and excellence, Regents College seeks scholars who, like the

Clerk of Oxenford, are knowledgeable and thoughtful, ethical and articulate, humble and generous of spirit, committed to students, and dedicated to learning.

In order to nourish such faculty, the administration strives to provide a structure, culture, and support which allow faculty to act on their intuitive good sense, to keep perspective, and to participate in informed discussion leading to decision and action. Beginning this year the college is embarking on a program of cyclical review of all existing degree requirements, examination options, and external sources of credit. Each year faculty will have the opportunity to consider a reasonable number of ongoing degree programs. We assume that a planned and orderly forum for predictable, comprehensive, programmed review will reduce the unsettling burden of constant overall curricular assessment. We also believe that this will assist faculty in maintaining standards and will create an environment in which they will conceive of new alternatives.

In addition to structure, the administration will intensify its efforts to provide information for faculty to use in making decisions. For example, this past summer, a student requested that he be exempted from an upper-level laboratory requirement on the basis of work experience. Before bringing the case to the faculty member, we asked the student to document his claims about his laboratory work experience. The initial letter from the laboratory described the work in sketchy fashion. The advisor insisted on more detail. The director of the laboratory responded, describing and documenting each of the student's responsibilities. The advisor then brought this information to the faculty member, who could comfortably make a firm decision.

In addition, we have found it important to capture individual decisions over which the faculty labor, either singly or as a group, to build a coherent program aimed at equitable treatment of individual students. In the instance mentioned earlier, in which the student sought credit for work completed on a non-matriculating basis, the dean worked with faculty to build a policy which would govern future occurances of the same issue. This practice of generalizing from the specific is beneficial in two ways. First, it captures the essence of faculty deliberation and makes the ideas and the actions available to other students under similar situations, thereby expanding access and enhancing equity. Second, it reduces the number of isolated time-consuming decisions faculty must make.

For all of these activities, the medieval academic Geoffrey Chaucer describes would have been ideal. This should not surprise us. History writer Barbara Tuchman saw so many parallels between then and now that she entitled her engaging study of fourteenth century Europe A Distant Mirror. To some extent, however, the modern world may require a bit more of its academics. Though Merry England wasn't all that merry, the Clerk of Oxenford could afford to be somewhat aloof, detached, concerned primarily with the theoretical nature of his realm and with his intellectual relationships with individual students. Nowhere in his description does Chaucer talk about service to the institution. Indeed, the medieval academic did practice somewhat on his own--tutoring students who chose to affiliate with him, often doing much of his work at a place physically separate from the university--often reading, writing, thinking, even meeting with students in his own home. Certainly this is true today for many 20th century faculty. In fact, increasingly encouraged by disparate scheduling and an emphasis on sometimes esoteric research, faculty are perceiving themselves as islands--detached from the institution, legitimately pursuing their own interests. Indeed, as James Hall notes in his recent book, Access Through Innovation, the faculty for external degree programs in particular face the danger of becoming remote (p. 87). This is a serious threat to the integrity of the institution because, as Chaucer evidently knew, commitment may be the most important feature of continuing education faculty. At the end of his description, Chaucer does something rare for him--he repeats a word in a single line. "And gladly wold he lerne and gladly teche." Engagement, enthusiasm, commitment were as important in the fourteenth century as now.

Regents College cannot afford to have its faculty drift away. Nor, I believe, can any continuing education program allow its faculty to become alienated or remote. Adult learner needs are concrete, intense, and usually attached to a deadline. Advisors and others who work directly with students in assessing their past and planning their future need faculty to be available, to be engaged, to be current, and to be innovative. To further this goal, in 1990-91, the college sponsored a series of seminars designed to created interchange between faculty and professional academic advisors. Although it was originally conceived as professional development for staff, it emerged as mutually beneficial. Faculty spoke on curricular issues and research directions within their disciplines. They studied representative course offerings and explained the rationale for the curriculum they had designed. Staff responded to the presentations with questions regarding specific students. Faculty reported that in preparing for and participating in the seminars they became more engaged with the institution and discovered areas where they needed further information or where they wanted to implement change. Since the seminars, faculty have reported that they can make decisions with more confidence because they realize they have more sensitivity and more knowledge. Professional staff report that they can advise students with greater knowledge. They also understand more clearly where the boundaries lie between faculty prerogative and staff discretion. We plan to expand the seminars. We will be interested in learning about development activities of other colleges.

As I indicated in my proposal, Regents College has a clear sense of the role it wishes faculty to play and has begun activities designed to stimulate faculty involvement and creativity. We are just beginning to take seriously the task of evaluating faculty and rewarding those who serve with distinction. I look forward to discussion with colleagues on continuing education on all these topics, particularly assessment and recognition, two areas in which Regents College practice and policy are currently emerging.

REFLECTIONS ON TEACHING & ADVISING ADULTS

Ed Bunnell
Professor, Continuing Education
University of South Alabama

So much has been written about this subject that one may be tempted to ask, "What else can be said about teaching?" But since I have been reading, thinking, discussing and investigating teaching for 40 years, I welcome the opportunity to share some of my thoughts with you on this important subject. These are my opinions, based on my experiences, and not intended as research findings.

Teaching is both a science and an art. Many creditable adult educators, such as Knowles, Houle, Tough, Verner and Chickering, have written extensively on the theories and techniques of teaching adults. It is important that we acquaint ourselves with their findings and apply them as we teach. We should also continue to research the teaching-learning process since there is still much that we do not know, but I share the conviction of Parker Palmer: good teaching cannot be reduced to technique. Or to say it another way, effective teaching goes beyond technique.

When acquaintances learn that I am a college professor, many ask me "What do you teach?" I invariably respond, "Students." This is not intended to be a flippant remark but an attempt to emphasize the proper focus on the student in the learning process. The goal of teaching is to help the students develop and enhance their lives.

The good teacher will be one that not only has mastered the subject but loves it as well. Nevertheless he/she understands that the transmission of information and skill is not the primary goal. It is the medium used to help the students develop their potential and to enhance their quality of life. Good teachers should help their students to understand what Schopenauer wrote almost two centuries ago in The Art of Literature:

> Students and learned persons of all sorts and every age, aim as a rule at acquiring information rather than insight. They pique themselves upon knowing about everything - stones, planets, battles, experiments and all books in existence. It never occurs to them that information is only a means of insight, and in itself of little or no value, that it is his way of thinking that makes a man a philosopher. (p.36,37)

A wholesome relationship between the teacher and students is essential to good teaching. I do not think it is an exaggeration to say good teachers love their students even more than they love their subject matter. This idea is especially important with adult learners where there is a potential for a peer relationship. The teacher should have greater subject matter expertise than the students, but in other ways the students may have equal or have even greater knowledge or skills than the teacher. The competent teacher is not threatened in this situation but sees it as an opportunity for mutual growth and development.

But at the other extreme are teachers who seem to think that the only subject in the curriculum of any real importance is the one they teach. They act as if their students are enrolled only in their course, or if they are studying other subjects, they are of little or no importance.

Such assumptions are not only wrong and detrimental to the students' intellectual progress, but they also put an unnecessary amount of responsibility on the teachers themselves. Just as we need a balanced diet of a variety of foods to develop and maintain a strong body, so we need a balanced consumption of intellectual substances to nourish our mental capacities.

Good teachers help students learn the joy of discovery and therefore how to learn for themselves. In the western world, Socrates and Jesus are often considered the models for all subsequent teachers, yet neither was a walking and talking encyclopedia that readily shared information with their students. Both pointed the students in the right direction and allowed them to find the answer themselves.

Socrates did it by asking questions to challenge and direct the inquirer. Both he and Jesus used simple stories, parables we call them, to guide their disciples' search. Both were interested in changing and enhancing the life of their students rather than preparing them to pass a standardized exam.

Like these teachers of antiquity, excellent teachers today are concerned about the ethical dimensions of life. One might respond by saying that "I teach science and science is value free." True enough, up to a point. But the values of honesty, hard work, accurate reporting of research and commitment to one's obligations are required of all researchers, especially scientists. Other teachers, especially those who teach the humanities, are directly concerned with the questions of ethics and values. Some of the greatest problems of our time are related to the decay of our value

143

structure. So while teachers should not indoctrinate their students with values that reflect a personal bias, they should explore ways to help students examine the ethical questions and enhance their own value systems.

The wise teacher will focus on the primary purpose of the subject matter. When I mention math and statistics requirements to many of my adult students, they almost panic. I believe this is because many of their previous teachers in those subjects emphasized computational skills, rather than the real purpose of math and statistics, which is to equip the students with the skills to think quantitatively. When the students understand that a working knowledge of statistics will help them better comprehend weather and stock market forecasts, political trends and may make his trips to Las Vegas profitable (or at least less expensive), will diligently apply themselves to learning these basic principles, as well as the rather minimal computational skills necessary to apply them. Fortunately, the acquisition of these skills has been greatly simplified by the calculators and computers available today.

Likewise, when the historian teaches history that emphasizes the fascinating ideas and events that have made our world what it is today, most students will respond with great interest. But revert to emphasizing dates of battles and treaties and long lists of dull politicians, and most will despise it.

The transmission of facts is of course an important element in the educational process, but it is not the only or even the most important part. (That is the reason I dislike the overuse of objective tests. They test the acquisition of facts almost exclusively). An important fact is pregnant with ideas. It is the examining, evaluating, reshaping and application of these ideas that actually develops and enhances the learner. Emphasis on the acquisition of facts will have little lasting effects on the learner. He/she soon may forget them. But emphasize the ideas that they generate, and the student may forever be enriched and is not likely to ever entirely forget the fact that gave them birth.

Students are first of all people. They want and deserve respect as individuals and not to be treated as objects, which is how many institutions tend to treat them. They have their own fears, doubts and weaknesses, but they would not have become students if they had not desired to grow, learn and develop. When the teacher respects their needs and desires and enthusiastically shows them how the subject that he/she has mastered can help them achieve their goals, most adult students will respond eagerly. As the teacher develops a positive relationship with the class, he/she can teach the students how to succeed, how to master the material that is being presented. If the class members have had the prerequisites required (and those who do not should not be permitted to enroll or remain in a credit class), there will be very few failures. I sometimes become disgusted with colleagues who boast of failing fifty or more percent of their students. Imagine a physician boasting of losing 50% of his patients! It should be a case for shame, for in such instances, it is the teacher who has failed the students.

Nevertheless, there is another side of this issue. Wise teachers will explain that they will do everything possible to help students learn: to challenge, encourage, correct and direct them. But learning is an activity of the student; one cannot force or coerce it. The teacher, especially of adults, is the facilitator, the arranger of learning events and activities. He/she can inspire and motivate, but the students are the participants who must use the opportunities presented to feed upon the intellectual substance that the teacher provides. Or, to use another metaphor, the teacher's role is similar to a mid-wife who assists in the delivery of the child, but it is only the mother who actually gives birth.

When adults seek to learn, they come to class with a fiber of knowledge already woven from life experiences and previous learning activities. We as teachers provide new threads of knowledge to be woven into the existing tapestry to enhance its beauty and utility. But we are the suppliers of the thread, not the weavers. That is the task of the students themselves.

Another issue that is often overlooked in American education at all levels is the overemphasis on individual performance. Communication between students in the classroom is discouraged because it might lead to cheating. Classrooms became unduly competitive with the emphasis on individual achievement and practically no attention given to the performance of the class as a whole or as a collection of groups of students.

This is unfortunate for several reasons. One is that such an atmosphere discourages the students from learning from each other. Adult students, as I have already mentioned, bring a great deal of knowledge and many skills with them. Wise teachers will attempt to create an ethos and develop techniques that will allow students to share their ideas, knowledge and skills.

An even more important reason for encouraging collaborative learning is that it better prepares students for life. In our professional lives we are constantly being called upon to work on committees or assigned to a task force. Families function better when they address the issues of life as a team rather than as individuals. Yet our education does little to teach students how to learn and work cooperatively.

Although this paper is written primarily to discuss the art rather than the science of teaching, I do not feel it inappropriate for me to urge teachers to master and employ techniques that encourage collaborative learning. The artistic use of workshops, research teams, focus groups and similar joint learning efforts will improve and expand the quality of education for the students and enhance the effectiveness of the teacher.

Finally, I want to say a few words about advising. Advising is the weakest link in the chain of academic efforts at most universities. Yet it remains extremely important. It is the function that brings together the goals of the institution and of the student and tries to weld them together into a single strand. Or to put it another way, teachers are micro-managers in education. They direct the students development in one or perhaps a few courses. Advisors are macro-managers. They direct the student in planning a curriculum of study. It demands concern, commitment, training and expertise. Few faculty do it well, and most avoid it as much as possible.

Nevertheless, good advising is necessary if we are to have excellent educational programs. They ensure that students are in the classes for which they are properly prepared and therefore will reduce the number of failures and poor grades. When supported by effective testing and counseling, they will increase the chances that the students are preparing for careers where they likely will be reasonably happy and successful. They make the educational experience happier and more rewarding for both the students and the teachers.

To improve advising, we must recognize its importance by either developing well prepared and well rewarded professional advisors or by the selection of gifted faculty members for the task. If we do the latter, we must provide them with the additional training required and reward them for good advising as we presently reward faculty for good teaching and good research.

Good advising systems cost money, but are not nearly as costly as poor ones in the long run. I am appalled at the high attrition rate from universities nationally, especially by adult students. There are many reasons why this situation exists and no one sure remedy, but more than any other one activity, good advising will reduce the drop out rate. When universities neglect their advising responsibilities, as almost all of them do, they are doing a serious disservice to the taxpayers who support them and to the students whom they are supposed to serve.

A STUDY OF STUDENT PERCEPTION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF ADP ADVISING TASKS AND FACULTY PERFORMANCE

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Introduction

Typically advisors in Adult Degree Programs perform a multiplicity of tasks. Although these vary from program to program there are many commonalities. Compared to the role of academic advisors in most colleges for traditionally aged students, the role of the advisor of adults is likely to be more comprehensive and to focus on collaboration between student and advisor. According to Decker, Redhorse and Lucas (1978) the objectives of this collaboration are to help students obtain an overview of the college, to integrate their learning experiences, to identify their learning needs and interests, and to develop learning objectives in order to plan students' educational programs. In addition ADP advisors help students to identify and deal with personal attitudes and concerns which obstruct learning. Evaluation of student performance and assessment of the strengths and limitations of the educational experience are also included in this model.

Watson (1987) identified four areas of ADP advisement tasks: assessing learning gained outside of the classroom, curriculum planning, facilitating the learning process, and guidance, which included information about institutional requirements as well as guidance in regard to careers and/or graduate school opportunities. An 18 item questionnaire was developed listing several advising tasks in each of the four categories (see figure 1). The questionnaires (one for advisors and one for students) were set up so that it was possible to compare advisors' perceptions of the importance of advising functions with their ratings of the extent to which they performed these tasks, and to similarly compare students' assessment of the importance of advising tasks with their perceptions of the performance of these tasks by their advisors. If both questionnaires were used, it would be possible to compare advisors perceptions of task importance and performance with student perceptions.

These questionnaires were used in a previous study of advising in the Mary Baldwin Adult Degree Program (Dillard, 1989). The Mary Baldwin program has a staff of faculty advisors whose major responsibility is advising. Usually each student is assigned to a single advisor who works with that student throughout the processes of recruitment, enrollment, and the completion of the degree. The Dillard (1989) study attempted to compare faculty and student perceptions of advising tasks and performance, as well as comparing students' perceptions of the importance of task with their perceptions of their advisors' performance of each task. The number of advisors included in the study was necessarily small, and their responses to the questionnaire so idiosyncratic that they defied analysis. An analysis of the students' responses revealed a considerable discrepancy between the advising tasks students felt were important and the extent to which they perceived that these tasks were performed by their advisors. These results

Figure 1

UWW ADVISEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions:
On the left, CIRCLE the number which indicates how important each task is to UWW advisement

1 very unimportant
2 somewhat unimportant
3 unimportant
4 somewhat important
5 important
6 very important

Directions:
On the right, CIRCLE the number which indicates the extent to which YOUR ADVISORS perform the task

1 always
2 frequently
3 occasionally
4 seldom
5 never

ASSESSING LEARNING

1 2 3 4 5 6	a.	Help the student identify learning gained outside the classroom.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5 6	b.	Determine which criteria will be used to evaluate learning gained outside the classroom.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5 6	c.	Establish specific ways to evaluate learning gained outside the classroom using relative criteria.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5 6	d.	Serve as a subject area expert in evaluating learning gained outside the classroom.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5 6	e.	Provide guidance in the development of documentation to yield evidence of learning gained outside the classroom.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5 6	f.	Complete necessary paperwork to record learning gained outside the classroom.	1 2 3 4 5

PLANNING CURRICULUM

1 2 3 4 5 6	g.	Help the student develop understanding of learning goals.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5 6	h.	Provide assistance in translating learning goals into specific learning activities.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5 6	i.	Help determine which learning gained outside the classroom will be part of the student's program.	1 2 3 4 5

FACILITATING THE LEARNING

1 2 3 4 5 6	j.	Help the student identify on-campus and community learning resources.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5 6	k.	Examine and discuss topics in student's program.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5 6	l.	Evaluate student's progress relative to learning goals.	1 2 3 4 5

PROVIDING GUIDANCE

1 2 3 4 5 6	m.	Provide the student with information regarding program and institutional requirements, policies, and procedures.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5 6	n.	Help the student identify occupations and career options.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5 6	o.	Help the student determine new directions.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5 6	p.	Serve as a contact with resources on and off campus.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5 6	q.	Help the student identify graduate school opportunities.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5 6	r.	Help the student with the evaluation process for graduation.	1 2 3 4 5

Note: UWW Questionnaire courtesy of Ulestine Watson, University Without Walls, Northeastern University, Bryn Mawr at St. Louis, Chicago Illinois.

suggested that ADP advisors were not meeting the perceived needs of their advisees. Not a happy result in a program that prides itself on its commitment to advising students!

Purpose of Study

There were, however, a number of discrepancies between the description of tasks on the Watson questionnaire and Mary Baldwin ADP practice. It was felt that Mary Baldwin students were unfamiliar with some of the advising tasks described, and their responses may have been affected by the unfamiliar vocabulary used to describe tasks that are performed by MBC faculty but referred to in other terms. The number of tasks being rated (18) also may have caused confusion.

For instance, although ADP advisors do help students identify learning gained outside the classroom and guide students in documenting that learning, either through examination or prior learning portfolio, the evaluation of those portfolios is usually done by on-campus faculty in the appropriate discipline, according to criteria designated by them. Although ADP faculty initiate the recording of credit awarded by either exam or portfolio, this is but a small part of the general record keeping function of advisors so that students probably do not perceive it as a separate task.

Mary Baldwin degree requirements now include area requirements to insure a grounding in the liberal arts, as well as specific course requirements for a variety of majors, so that degree programs are not as individually designed as in some ADP programs. Students at Mary Baldwin do have a great deal of course choice within these guidelines. Courses may be taken by independent study, and students may design special courses in collaboration with advisors and tutors. However, this option is not now frequently exercised.

Although curriculum selection is not as highly individualized as it once was at Mary Baldwin, ADP advisors still represent the main relationship that most ADP students have with the college, especially in the regional offices. A major role for MBC ADP advisors is providing students with encouragement and support, as well as aiding in problem solving in a wide variety of areas: academic, personal, financial, and unclassifiable. The role of advisor as ombudsman is an important aspect of the function of Mary Baldwin ADP advisors.

The purpose of this study, then, was to reword and shorten the Watson questionnaire to more accurately reflect Mary Baldwin College ADP practice and vocabulary, and then compare student perceptions of the importance of specific advising tasks with their perception of the frequency with which their advisors actually performed each task. It was hypothesized that using a revised questionnaire there would be a higher correlation betweeen student perceptions of the importance of advising tasks and the frequency with which they perceived that their advisors performed these tasks.

Procedure

Questionnaires were mailed to 100 ADP students in the Lynchburg and Roanoke area, and 63 were returned. The revised questionnaire included two items from each of the four areas of the Watson questionnaire: assessing learning, planning curriculum, facilitating learning, and providing guidance. Two items were added, adapted from the form the MBC ADP uses for student evaluation of advisors, chosen to reflect the supportive and collaborative function of the ADP advising at MBC. Students were asked to rate the importance of each of the ten tasks on a 5 point scale and to rate the extent to which their advisor performed the tasks on a similar 5 point scale (see Figure 2).

Based on the mean ratings for each task, rank order was determined for the importance of task and frequency of advisor performance. The correlation of importance of task with freqency of performance was computed using the Spearman rank order procedure.

Results

The correlation of task importance and frequency of advisor performance (r_s = .87) was considerably higher than that reported by Dillard (1989) and supported the hypothesis that there would be little discrepancy between student perceptions of importance of advising tasks and their perceptions of the frequency with which advisors performed these tasks as measured by the revised questionnaire.

The advising tasks ranked by students as first and second in importance were "Inform the student of program policies, requirements, policies and procedures" and "Respect students' right to make their own decisions" (see Table 1). These two tasks were rated as second and first, respectively, in terms of frequency of faculty performance. The task seen as least important on both rankings was "Guide the student in documenting

Figure 2

Advisement Questionnaire

Name__________________________
Advisor__________________________

Directions:

In the lefthand column, CIRCLE the number which indicates how important each advising task is to you the student.

In the righthand column CIRCLE the number which indicates the extent to which your advisor performs the task.

Importance of task	Extent your advisor performs task.
1 absolutely essential	1 always
2 very important	2 frequently
3 somewhat important	3 occasionally
4 rather unimportant	4 seldom
5 of no importance	5 never

1 2 3 4 5	Help the student to identify learning gained outside the classroom.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Guide the student in documenting learning gained outside the classroom.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Help the student to develop an understanding of the learning goals of a liberal arts education.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Provide assistance in identifying meaningful learning experiences to fulfill general education requirements.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Help the student to identify on-campus and community learning resources.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Serve as a intermediary with resources on and off campus.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Inform the student of program requirements, policies, and procedures.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Help the student identify career options and/or graduate school opportunities.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Offer students encouragement and support for their academic endeavors.	1 2 3 4 5
1 2 3 4 5	Respect students' right to make their own decisions.	1 2 3 4 5

Please return in the envelope provided by March 12. THANK YOU!

TABLE 1

ADVISEMENT TASKS LISTED IN ORDER OF STUDENT PERCEIVED IMPORTANCE COMPARED WITH THE EXTENT OF PERFORMANCE

IMPORTANCE		QUESTION	EXTENT PERFORMED	
Rank Order			Rank Order	
1	Mean = 1.38 SD = .73	Inform the student of program policies, requirements, policies and procedures.	2	Mean = 1.57 SD = .88
2	Mean = 1.66 SD = 1.4	Respect students' right to make their own decisions.	1	Mean = 1.44 SD = .69
3	Mean = 1.80 SD = .79	Offer students encouragement and support for their academic endeavors.	3	Mean = 1.96 SD = .93
4	Mean = 1.98 SD = .92	Provide assistance in identifying meaningful learning experiences to fulfill general education requirements.	4	Mean = 2.12 SD = .98
5	Mean = 2.0 SD = .88	Help the student identify career options and/or graduate school opportunities.	9	Mean = 2.58 SD = 1.14
6	Mean = 2.04 SD = .94	Serve as a intermediary with resources on and off campus.	5	Mean =2.19 SD = 1.1
7	Mean = 2.06 SD = .79	Help the student to identify on-campus and community resources.	6	Mean = 2.38 SD = 1.05
8	Mean = 2.1 SD = .73	Help the student to develop an understanding of the learning goals of a liberal arts education.	7.5	Mean =2.39 SD = 1.14
9	Mean = 2.27 SD = .99	Help the student to identify learning gained outside the classroom.	7.5	Mean = 2.39 SD = 1.1
10	Mean = 2.28 SD = 1.07	Guide the student in documenting learning gained outside the classroom.	10	Mean = 2.84 SD = 1.28
Overall means =	1.97	rs = .87		2.18
Overall SDs =	.93			.92

N = 63

learning gained outside the classroom." The greatest discrepancy in rankings was for "Help the student identify career options and/or graduate school opportunities" rated fifth in importance but ninth in terms of frequency of faculty performance.

Discussion

Certainly it came as no surprise that the function of providing information about program requirements, policies and procedures was ranked first in importance by students, although slightly surprising that it ranked second in terms of faculty performance. Perhaps the efforts of advisors to inform students of program policies and procedures are not quite as effective as advisors would like to believe. Alternatively information about program procedures is conveyed in group orientation sessions and workshops, so that this may not be perceived by students as the main responsibility of the individual advisor.

Considering the program ideology it is reassuring that ADP advisors, first and foremost, are perceived by students as respecting their right to make their own decisions. It may be that students are more aware of their own role in decision making in the ADP advising process because in many instances this is a novel academic experience for them, and sometimes, initially, an undesired one.

The discrepancy between the importance attributed to career and graduate school guidance (ranked 5) and frequency of advisor performance (ranked 9) corresponds with advisors' perceptions that students ask for more guidance in this respect than advisors are prepared to give, because of lack of training or lack of conviction as to the relevance of such advice. None of the ADP advisors are currently in the careers they initially chose. Careers are affected by many unpredictable events. The majority of adults will change careers two or three times in the course of their working life. Students often want guarantees of future employment that cannot be supplied!

Although documenting learning gained outside the classroom (rated last in importance and performance) is an important feature of the Mary Baldwin ADP program, credit obtained through this option usually represents a relatively small portion of students' overall degree programs, which may explain its low ranking.

Conclusions

As well as the high correlation of student perceptions of the importance of advising tasks in the Mary Baldwin Adult Degree Program and the frequency of advisor performance, there is considerable face validity between student perceptions of ADP advising and advisors' observations (informally gathered). Apparently there is a congruence of faculty and student views of the collaborative nature of ADP advisement. The hypothesis of little discrepancy between student perception of the importance of advising tasks and performance of these tasks by ADP advisors was supported by the data which suggests that Mary Baldwin ADP faculty advisors are perceived by their students as adequately meeting their needs.

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THE ROSSMAN ADULT LEARNING INVENTORY:
CREATING AWARENESS OF ADULT DEVELOPMENT

by

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It is important for educators of adults to recognize that the nature of adulthood requires an educational experience which, in certain ways, is especially for adults. The clue to providing such an experience lies in identifying the characteristics of adulthood -- characteristics that are relevant to the educational experience.

As more and more adults move into educational settings that have traditionally been oriented to older adolescents and younger adults, more educators are finding themselves ill-equipped to handle these new students in terms of attitude and theory base. Unless these educators are equipped with understandable, relevant concepts for dealing with adults, not only will the effectiveness of the learning situation be lessened, but lasting harm may be done to the adult learner.

Similarly, institutions of higher learning are remiss in not preparing educators with information regarding biological, psychological and sociological aspects of the life span, particularly as applied to adults. For many teacher-training institutions, developmental psychology has meant child psychology. Information regarding adult development is rare.

In 1977, in an effort to create an awareness of adult development, a sixty-item questionnaire, the *Rossman Adult Learning Inventory (RALI)*, was conceptualized, developed, and field-tested. In 1989, as a result of several revisions, a forty-four item version, utilizing the same four categories as in the original RALI was developed (see attachment #1).

The questionnaire segments adult development characteristics into four sections: (1) orientation to learning, (2) mental abilities, (3) physiological factors, and (4) psychological factors. Each item on the RALI is supported by research in the field of adult education and development.

Since its inception, the RALI and supporting documentation have been presented formally in a variety of institutional settings in the United States, Europe, and Asia. The RALI has also been introduced in many staff development workshops and university adult education classes. The revised version with current literature and research appeared in *Applying Adult Development Strategies*, number 45, Spring 1990 issue of New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, Mark H. Rossman and Maxine E. Rossman (Eds.), Jossey-Bass Inc., publishers.

The awareness of adult development principles generated by the administration and discussion of the RALI has helped teachers, counselors, and adult learners adapt their teaching, counseling and learning styles to be more consistent with adult development theory. The RALI also allows faculty and adult learners to determine the extent to which they are aware of adult learner characteristics and to understand the implications these characteristics have for both teaching and learning. This understanding allows faculty and learners to engage in purposeful development and growth.

Rossman Adult Learning Inventory

Directions: The following list contains a series of general statements about the characteristics of the adult learner (over twenty-five years of age). If you think the statement is true, put a T in the blank. If you think the statement is false, put an F in the blank. Please answer each question.

___ 1. Adult learners should be encouraged to relate new or difficult concepts to their existing experience.
___ 2. Adult learners are often issue (or problem) centered rather than subject centered.
___ 3. It is difficult for an adult to do a familiar task in an unfamiliar way.
___ 4. Adult learners usually want educational experiences that relate to job/life situations.
___ 5. Most adult learning occurs outside formal education institutions.
___ 6. An adult's experience may interfere with the learning process.
___ 7. Adult learners should not be involved in formulating their learning objectives.
___ 8. Adult learners desire minimum time expenditures to complete their educational objectives.
___ 9. Adults and children have the same orientation to learning.
___ 10. There is very little diversity in groups of adult learners.
___ 11. Adult students should not be allowed to set their own learning pace.
___ 12. The pattern of mental abilities does not change with age.
___ 13. Performance of adults on tests measuring vocabulary and general information improves with age.
___ 14. Compared to youth, adults usually require a longer time to perform learning tasks.
___ 15. Age influences the speed of learning.
___ 16. Age in itself does little to affect an individual's power to learn.
___ 17. Adult learning is influenced by the amount of previous formal education.
___ 18. Scores on tests measuring dexterity show no decline with age.
___ 19. Motivation of the adult taking a test is not a major factor in performance.
___ 20. Recency of participation in an educational activity improves an adult's educational performance.
___ 21. All adult students have the same learning style.
___ 22. Adult students often lack necessary study skills.
___ 23. Maximum auditory acuity is attained by about fifteen years of age.
___ 24. The inability to hear can produce emotional disturbances such as depression, anxiety, and frustration.
___ 25. Visual acuity attains its maximum at about eighteen years of age.
___ 26. For normal learning tasks an adult of age thirty requires 120 watts of illumination, whereas by age fifty, 180 watts are required.
___ 27. With advancing age the lens loses its elasticity and cannot focus readily.
___ 28. In the aging process there is a loss of auditory acuity on the high tones.
___ 29. Speed of reaction time tends to decline with age.
___ 30. As we age, we slow in our reaction to auditory stimuli.
___ 31. A major change in distance acuity occurs between ages fifty and sixty.
___ 32. Physical strength peaks between ages twenty-five and thirty.
___ 33. Learning performance declines with age.
___ 34. Frequently the fear of aging is more harmful than the aging process itself.
___ 35. Adults, even more than children, are sensitive to failure in their learning situation.
___ 36. Most adults enter a learning situation with a high readiness to learn.
___ 37. Adults rarely hold the opinion that they are unable to learn.
___ 38. Once the adult has formed a perception of a stimulus, it is difficult to change that perception.
___ 39. The concept of developmental tasks provides a way of identifying the educational needs of adults.
___ 40. Emotional association with words or events does not affect the adult in gaining new knowledge.
___ 41. A phenomenon of the adult years is the universal experience that time seems to pass more quickly as one ages.
___ 42. Adulthood is not a developmental period in itself.
___ 43. The adult has a less realistic attitude toward time than youth.
___ 44. In the adult learning process, external motivation is usually more effective than internal motivation.

Track C

Program Effectiveness

Evaluating Program Quality and Effectiveness:

A Case of Marian College

Interest has broadened in non-traditional degree programs in this decade more than ever before. Individuals pursuing the non-traditional degrees tend to have their priorities straight: they maintain regular jobs so as to support their families, meet some needs, and secure degrees in order to get promotions at work (Education, 1991). The proliferation of non-traditional degree programs has not seemed to silence the opponents of such programs, since there are still unanswered questions in terms of the programs' quality and effectiveness.

In order to maintain quality in a non-traditional degree program, one needs to consider the relevance and effectiveness of such programs. At the same time this quality should be defined from the clientele point of view. A marriage between the program administrator's definition of what is important and the testimony of the clientele (participants and employers) as to how the program meets their needs will be sufficient to evaluate the quality of the program (Person & Springer, 1988). The students' satisfaction with the degree program and the actual utility of the degree in the marketplace should be closely examined while defining the quality of the program.

The only way to know for certain how effective the program is to look at it from the customers' standpoint, that of the graduates of the program and their employers. Adult learners differ from traditional college students in significant ways, including their stages of development, value systems, outside responsibilities, and learning characteristics. They tend to be sacrificing more than younger students to attend college and to be highly motivated; therefore, they are in a better position to evaluate their needs or the utility values of their degree program. The non-traditional extended degree program at Marian College fit well into the mission statement of the institution: educate the whole person; meet the intellectual, spiritual, aesthetic, social, vocational and physical needs of its community; promote dialogue among the various disciplines; offer a combination of excellent professional training with a quality liberal arts education; and maintain a serious commitment to the continuing education of adults on both professional and personal levels (adapted from the Marian College Mission Statement).

The bachelor's of business administration (BBA) program was started at the college in 1986. Over 150 students have graduated from the program already. It is a completion-degree program, whereby students enter with two or more years of college experience and a minimum of 57 transferrable credits.

In the Fall of 1990, a follow-up study of both graduates and supervisors/employers was conducted in response to the unanswered questions in terms of the programs' quality and effectiveness. The purpose of Marian's study was to find out how well its business program met the needs of the graduates to make a living.

The major objectives of the study were to:

1. determine the relevance of the program to the job.
2. identify overall effectiveness of program in general, instruction and curriculum.
3. find the degree to which the program helps graduates' career development in terms of oral communication, problem solving,

ability to organize and analyze, leadership, decision-making, interpersonal relations and creative thinking .

4. identify any changes in students' employment status since graduation.
5. identify what factor influenced the choice of business degree program.
6. compare the responses of graduates and employers/supervisors regarding graduates' career development.
7. identify areas employers perceived to be the need of future graduates.

DESIGN OF SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The researcher developed a survey instrument based on the review of literature and follow-up survey from other institutions. Two separate questionnaires were developed, for the graduates and the supervisors/employers, covering major items discussed in the research objectives. Of 187 possible responses, only one-third were received early enough for the analysis. The researcher contacted a random sample of non-respondents and found a similarity between the respondents and non-respondents.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

The following are summaries of the database results which contain graphic displays and a brief description highlighting selected items of interest indicated in the objectives.

1. Objective One

This objective was to ascertain the "extent that job was related to the program." Nearly 43 percent claimed that their job was directly related to the program (Table 2), while another 51 percent claimed that their job was somewhat related to the program. There was a follow-up question asking the respondents if their job-versus-program relationship was due to a choice or a forced situation. Sixty-two percent claimed that it was by choice (Table 3).

2. Objective Two

The second objective of the study sought to determine the views of the "overall effectiveness of program in general, instruction and curriculum." Over 50 percent of the respondents suggested that program effectiveness in the three categories was high, and another 40 percent claimed that it was moderate (Table 4).

3. Objective Three

The third objective was to determine the "extent to which program helped develop selected competencies." Eighty percent suggested that the program was instrumental in their development of oral and written communication, problem-solving, organization and analysis, leadership, decision-making, interpersonal relations, creative thinking and awareness of profession skills (Table 5).

4. Objective Four

Objective four sought to identify "situations which apply to student since graduation from college." While 68.6 percent returned to their prior job (Table 7), 39 percent received salary increases and another 23.5 percent received promotions. Only 15.7 percent took a job with other companies.

5. Objective Five

Objective five sought to identify "situations that influence choice of business program." Eighty-four percent of the respondents claimed "to satisfy personal desire" was the most important need for choosing a business degree program (Table 8). Another 78.4 percent felt that concerns of "greater personal satisfaction and development" influenced their choice of a business degree program. About 30 percent claimed that "increased income" and "developing new career" were great influences in the choice of a degree program.

6. Objective Six

Objective six sought to identify the "correlations between employers'/supervisors' and graduates' perception of preparedness in selected competencies." There were some correlations between the attitudes of graduates and employers/supervisors in regard to the following competencies: oral and written communication, problem-solving and decision-making, ability to organize and analyze, leadership, and interpersonal relations (Table 13). However, only "written communication" was statistically significant at ".01" level of significance.

7. Objective Seven

This objective sought to "identify areas where future graduates need more training." The following were suggestions by the employers/supervisors of the graduates:

-Creativity and decision-making

-Ability to analyze variances, solve problems

-Managing others

-How to gain employees' respect

- Supervising employees' performance
- How to react in crisis situation
- Understanding electronics
- Problem solving (research)
- Forward vision
- Computer knowledge
- Continue to move away from "fluff"
- Subjects and concentrate on teaching the skills
- Product costing
- Make versus buy analysis
- People management--Teamwork
- Math/problem solving--computer science--heavy application
- Oral communications/employer motivation
- Economics--international concerns approach
- Data processing--use and relationships
- Oral and written communication
- Interpersonal relations
- Safety/employer relations as a need in industry, computer literacy is a must
- Human resources
- Small business management and start up
- Problem solving and decision making
- Math, science, and computer skills
- Second language skills

-Computer system, design techniques, "cases" technology

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the study suggested that additional work needed to be done with the curriculum and instruction. Although changes in the curriculum have been made in the last six months, there is certainly more to be done. The supervisors/employers were very impressed with Marian's graduates. Interestingly, the graduates underrated themselves in the identified competencies in comparison to their supervisors/employers. This suggests that more study needs to be conducted on the perception of the graduates regarding the degree received. Based on these results, a creative list of suggestions for the improvement of the program was created, with special implications to the program director and academic dean. For instance:

1. The curriculum should be reviewed once every two to three years to reflect changes in the marketplace in response to clientele needs.
2. There is a need to continue to monitor the adjuncts' faculty evaluations and provide training for the adjuncts which will tie participation to conditions for continued association with the program. Since the life of any program is contingent on the quality of instruction and the curriculum, it is very important to pay extra attention to faculty development so as to improve the effectiveness of Marian's non-traditional program.
3. The marketing of the program should focus on main items which influenced the adult to seek a business degree: greater personal satisfaction and development, satisfying of personal desire, increased income, and developing new career options.
4. For marketing purposes, situations which applied to the respondents should be

communicated to the potential students. For instance, since graduation from the college, 68.6 percent have kept their prior job; 39 percent have received salary increases, including 23.5 percent who received promotions; and only 15.7 percent took jobs with other companies.

5. The program reviewers should consider areas where future graduates of the program need training so as to address such needs in course offerings.

6. Future study should focus on perceptions of the non-traditional student as to the quality of the degree received in comparison to the perception of traditional students. This researcher noticed some differences between graduates and their employers/ supervisors in the rating of competencies possessed by the graduates. Specifically, the graduates rated the competencies lower than the employers/supervisors.

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TABLE 2

EXTENT THAT JOB IS RELATED TO PROGRAM

Job Relation to Program	Percentage
Directly	42.6%
Somewhat	51.1
None	6.1

TABLE 3

JOB / PROGRAM RELATIONSHIP DUE TO:

	Percentages
Choice	61.5%
Forced Situation	38.5

TABLE 4

OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS OF PROGRAM
(Instruction and Curriculumm)

	Percentages						
rogram Aspects	Very High	High	Moderate	Low	Very Low	*Mean	Deviation
Program (In General)	16.0	42.0	38.0	4.0	0.0	3.700	0.789
Instruction (Teaching)	8.0	44.0	42.0	4.0	2.0	3.520	0.789
Curriculum	16.0	40.0	40.0	4.0	0.0	3.680	0.794

*Based on a Five Point Scale...Very High=5, Moderate=3, Very Low=1

TABLE 5

EXTENT TO WHICH PROGRAM HELPED DEVELOP FOLLOWING COMPETENCIES

	Percentages						
	Strong		Moderate	None		*Mean	Deviation
Competencies	5	4	3	2	1		
Oral Communication	8.0	28.0	46.0	12.0	6.0	3.200	0.969
Written Communication	14.0	44.0	32.0	6.0	4.0	3.580	0.950
Problem Solving	4.0	40.0	46.0	8.0	2.0	3.360	0.776
Ability to Organize	20.0	34.0	38.0	6.0	2.0	3.640	0.942
Ability to Analyze	4.0	44.0	42.0	8.0	2.0	3.400	0.782
Leadership	14.0	46.0	26.0	12.0	2.0	3.580	0.950
Decision-Making	8.0	40.0	40.0	10.0	2.0	3.420	0.859
Interpersonal Relations	6.0	40.0	42.0	8.0	4.0	3.360	0.875
Creative Thinking	12.0	32.0	46.0	8.0	2.0	3.440	0.884
Awareness of Profession	6.0	30.0	44.0	12.0	8.0	3.140	0.990

*Based on a 5 Point Scale (Strong Influence = 5 .... None = 1)

TABLE 7

THE FOLLOWING HAVE APPLIED SINCE GRADUATION

The Graduates Have	Percentages
Returned To Prior Job	68.6%
Received A Promotion	23.5
Received A Salary Increase	39.2
Taken A Job With Another Company	15.7
Begun A Graduate Program	7.8
Had Advancement Opportunities	13.7

TABLE 8

INFLUENCE OF ADULT LEARNER NEEDS ON PROGRAM EVALUATION

Adult Needs	Percentages				
	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	*Mean	Deviation
Greater Personal Satisfaction & Development	78.4	18.6	2.0	1.200	0.404
Increase in Income	33.3	45.1	19.6	1.860	0.729
Satisfy Personal Desire	84.3	9.8	3.9	1.180	0.482
Developing New Career	27.5	37.3	29.4	2.021	0.785
Satisfy Degree Requirement For Job	21.6	35.3	39.2	2.184	0.782
Satisfy Academic Requirement For Graduation	19.6	37.3	41.2	2.220	0.764
Understanding of Science & Technology	7.8	35.3	54.9	2.480	0.646
Involved in Social & Political Concerns	3.9	33.3	60.8	2.580	0.575
Appreciation For Arts & Literature	11.8	52.9	33.3	2.220	0.648

*Based on a Three Point Scale (Very Important = 1, Somewhat Important = 2, Not Important = 3)

TABLE 13

CORRELATION OF COMPETENCIES BETWEEN SUPERVISORS AND EMPLOYEES

Competencies	Correlation	Probability
Oral Communication	-.0709	.360
Written Communication	-.4931	.004*
Problem Solving	-.2512	.099
Ability to Organize	.0501	.402
Ability to Analyze	.1496	.224
Leadership	.1232	.270
Decision Making	-.0737	.358
Interpersonal Relations	.0613	.378

*Significant at .01 Level

DIALOGUE ON DIVERSITY: THE PERSON AND THE INSTITUTION

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We are at a point in American education in which "diversity" and "multicultural concerns" are a priority, albeit often a controversial one. Dialogues about "general education" requirements, access of the disenfranchised to learning opportunities, and preparing our students for a workforce in which women and minorities occupy a greater proportion are all pieces of this large, somewhat amorphous, and pressing issue we are encountering. And each of us, based on our own experiences and values, comes to the table with a different agenda.

What roles do our personal histories play in this discussion? How de we bring about a resolution to the complex issues we are facing when our individual perspectives are so different?

At the School for New Learning, as elsewhere, we are facing this quandary. As an institution, we have placed "diversity" at the top of our list of priorities, and have created a Diversity Task Force to spearhead our efforts. We have decided on beginning our charge with a study of current perspectives of the members of the school's constituencies, and are beginning to uncover some of the differences in perspective that the SNL community holds. We are also discovering some other insights and raising more questions:

> We come to the work of the Task Force with different concerns, based at least in part on our own identities as members of certain groups. Can this committee bring together these often clashing goals? Should it try?
>
> In a larger sense -- here and elsewhere -- can we bridge the difference, or are there important issues which should be handled by more focused groups (Latino, gay, African-American, women, even white heterosexual male . . .)? What happens when we spin off in different directions? What do we gain by working together? What do we lose?

This workshop will explore these questions from the personal perspectives of the facilitators and participants. Leading the session are a Puerto Rican Latina and a gay white male, who bring their histories of oppression, concern, and activism. We will actively encourage those attending to join in the discussion.

"EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING, REFLECTIONS ON PRACTICE AND THE ORGANIZATIONAL ACTION SCIENTIST"

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It is a cliche to say that we are in an era of unprecedented continual change. But, change is the hallmark of our times. Some writers have called this a period of transition in which we are moving toward a new social order. Every institution in our society has, and is still, undergoing radical change, and those which have not been able to change fast enough to meet the challenges presented by the new age have been met with widespread criticism.

Along with the change in our institutions there are two parallel and concurrent changes. These are changes in the skills and abilities needed by the practitioners who manage organizations and hence a concurrent change in the training of those who are to manage. It is this latter issue which is the focus of this paper, which will examine the work of a number of authors who have expressed concerns with the training of both managers and professionals. Based on these considerations, this paper will propose a model for reorienting the training of managers. This model whose focus is on the nature of organizational inquiry will incorporate the tacit understanding that practitioners have about their practice and the body of accumulated knowledge in the discipline. This model also addresses the problems which are routed to current practice and adds to the body of knowledge available to other practitioners encountering similar problems. This model seeks to integrate science with practice; it is a model of inquiry which acknowledges the practitioner's ability to learn from the practice experience and translate that learning into both relevant and rigorous knowledge.

Many of these ideas concerning the training of professionals have been addressed before. Donald Schon has directed considerable criticism at professional training in general. Professionals as a whole, he believes, are a product of a paradigm which may not be moving with the times and certainly not within the context of practice. The traditional view of a professional discipline is, as Schon (1983) stated,

> based on technical rationality. In this view, new knowledge is generated through scientific research in the basic sciences or underlying disciplines. Then there is an applied science which addresses diagnostic and problem-solving techniques. Applied science rests on the foundation of basic science. Application is found in practice. The three components are given in hierarchical order of status, with practice having the lowest status.

Most professional disciplines have attempted to gain the status of the 'higher professions' by emulating the medical model. In this model knowledge is generated through the scientific method and applied to problems which the professional addresses. This model relegates practice to the implementation of scientific principles and the lowest of status.

The highest status and generator of research is found in the basic disciplines whose investigations are single disciplines in focus. These disciplines tend to have a preference for experimental designs which tend to reduce problems to single variables which can be researched through experimental designs. These disciplines do not address the 'all happening at once' interdisciplinary nature of problems found in professional practice.

The researchers in this older paradigm tend to be isolated and removed from practice. They oftentimes do not understand the problems encountered in practice or are unaware of the ramifications of implementing their solutions. This paradigm has resulted in the researcher having authority in the accumulation of knowledge, and has perpetuated a top down view of knowledge. The researchers claim to be value-free and neutral in their investigations. They strive for detachment and objectivity. However, this is contrary to the practitioner's need for 'good' solutions and their passionate commitment to their professions and the mission of their organizations. Schon summarizes his work,

> I argued for a new epistemology of practice, one that would stand the questions of professional knowledge on its head by taking as its point of departure the competence and artistry already embedded in skillful practice--especially, the reflection-in-action (the thinking what they are doing while they are doing it) that practitioners sometimes bring to situations of uncertainty, uniqueness and conflict. In contrast, I claimed, the professional school of contemporary research universities give privileged status to systematic, preferably scientific, knowledge. Technical rationality, the schools' prevailing epistemology of practice, treats professional competence as the application of privileged knowledge to instrumental problems of practice. The school's normative curriculum and separation of research from practice leave no room for reflection-in-action, and thereby create - for educators, practitioners and students - a dilemma of rigor or relevance. (Schon, 1987).

It is our view as well as Schon's view that this criticism also pertains to the field of general management, that as part of this misdirection in the formation of knowledge, the knowledge consumers or practitioners, as part of their training, fail to learn the principles of inquiry and knowledge generation as it relates to the process of management. As a result, they are not capable of effectively criticizing, altering or developing the knowledge vis-a-vis their practice as managers in organizations. Thus they espouse theories that are faulty and are resistant to change. They cannot do the type of research which John Seely Brown (1991) has called research that continuously reinvents the corporation.

In a time when there is a growing demand for professional services and increasing expectation for results from professional problem-solving, there is also a crisis of confidence in the professions. The professions have been unable to solve many problems, and unable to predict some undesirable effects of attempted solutions. The professionals find themselves in an increasingly complex, changing environment where unique, new or unusual cases are encountered and the models or theories generated within the scientific paradigm do not apply. There is a growing suspicion that professional schools teach science which does not apply to practice. Again Schon notes,

> The crises of confidence in professional knowledge correspond to a similar crisis in professional education. If professions are blamed for ineffectiveness and impropriety, their schools are blamed for failing to teach the rudiments of effective and ethical practice. Chief Justice Warren Burger criticizes the law schools, for example, because trial lawyers are not good at their jobs. In the present climate of dissatisfaction with public schools, school of education are taken to task....Business schools become targets of criticism when their M.B.A.'s are seen as having failed to exercise responsible stewardship or rise adequately to the Japanese challenge. Schools of engineering lose credibility because they are seen as producing narrowly trained technicians deficient in capacity for design and wisdom to deal with dilemmas of technological development. (Schon, 1987).

The crisis in the professions exist and is rooted in "the epistemology of professional practice." This paradigm and its epistemology separates research and its resulting theory from practice. "What is more, there is a disturbing tendency for research and practice to follow divergent paths. Practitioners and researchers tend increasingly to live in different worlds, pursue different enterprises and have little to say to one another" (Schon, 1987). This can result in models which are not useful to practice, and can hinder the development of the field. While a field can develop from practice or research, a profession needs theory, models or research which have practical applicability in the field. Conversely, practice can develop a field when it can be generalized to a model, principle or theory which goes beyond the unique case and can be made useful to other practitioners.

However, the schism between theory and research that currently exists in many professions potentially thwarts this type of development, and results in isolated practice and impractical and irrelevant science. Schon states that the rational technical models leave practitioners with the "relevance or rigor" dilemma (1987). This model assigns the notion of rigor to a methodology which has become irrelevant to practice.

As a result of this failure in the training of professionals, managers have similarly suffered in their ability to learn adequately from their practice. Several authors have written on this problem including Argyris (1982), Argyris and Schon (1974) and Kolb (1984). Argyris and Argyris and Schon focused their criticism on the training of managers and have expressed their concern that the theories that are espoused by managers may not be the same theories that actually guide their behavior. In order for managers to be effective in their business they must learn to discard and replace ineffective theory through special processes of learning which Argyris and Schon call double loop learning, learning which looks into norms and contexts and frames of reference which guide behavior. However, managers are not trained in the ways of knowing which will help them resolve this problem. This kind of training does not take place.

Kolb (1984), who helps us understand the nature of this failure, provides a very clear delineation of this inability to learn from experience. He has also provided us with some conceptual tools and empirical data for understanding the problems of training mangers. Kolb's concepts for evaluating the experiential learning and various ways of understanding that managers and others use is based on his theory of experiential learning.

He has developed a four facet theory of the types of knowledge that are used in understanding in general. In addition, he has developed a theory of experiential learning which describes both the sequence of learning in these four facets or types as well as a theory about the predilection for individuals to be fixated or characterized by one of these four types. Our model is base in part on Kolb's types of knowing and his sequencing which itself has been heavily influenced by the approach of action research.

The four personal knowledge types are variously called divergent, assimilative, convergent, and accommodative. These can be seen in figure 1.

The first of these is divergent knowledge which is based on concrete experiences which are transformed by reflective observation. Individuals who are oriented toward concrete experience have an emphasis on the immediate human situation and the associated feelings towards understanding of qualitative rather than quantitative aspects of knowledge. The general orientation is toward a synthesis or unity. The orientation toward reflective observation or intention focuses on watching and understanding situations as opposed to acting in the situation. The variety of knowledge associated with this pure type is highly integrative. Hence the type of knowledge that is generated by these two orientations, divergent knowledge, is "to view concrete situations from many perspectives and to organize many relationships into a meaningful 'gestalt'" with a sensitivity to meaning and values (Kolb, 1984). The emphasis is on adaptation by observations, rather than action. The term divergent is used because of the impact of the diversity of concrete experiences on the reflective state.

The second type of knowledge, that produced by the actions of reflective observation on the abstract conceptualizing style, is called assimilative knowledge. The individual with an orientation toward abstract conceptualization is the logician who is more predisposed toward inductive logical thinking than toward feeling and is a constructor of general theories with a focus on analysis (as opposed to synthesis), quantification and abstraction as opposed to feeling, values, reflective observation focuses on understanding by observation as opposed to practical application. This is a very systematic, quantitative and rigorous orientation. In conjunction with the reflective transformation style this leads to a type of knowledge less concerned with people than with ideas and abstract concepts whose practical value is not as significant as its precision and its logicality.

The third type of knowledge is the convergent type which is composed of abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. As an individual orientation active experimentation involves an orientation toward doing rather than observing, with a more pragmatic and applied orientation, knowledge which is useful or applicable is more important than that which is absolutely true. This active or doing orientation tends to lead to knowledge that is more dispersive than to be integrative. The combination of this style with the abstract conceptualization leads to a learning style which is focused on problem-solving, decision making and practical application of ideas us8ing the logic of the hypothetico deductive method. The term convergence was used to reflect the search for the one, best solution to a question or problem.

The final type of knowledge is derived from the active experimentation mode and the orientation to concrete experience. This style is called accommodative because the learner, focusing on feelings and concrete experiences transforms these by active experimentation without reflection or conceptualization. This type of knowledge would involve decision making and accomplishment of tasks in uncertain situations, a job not unlike those of general or executive management.

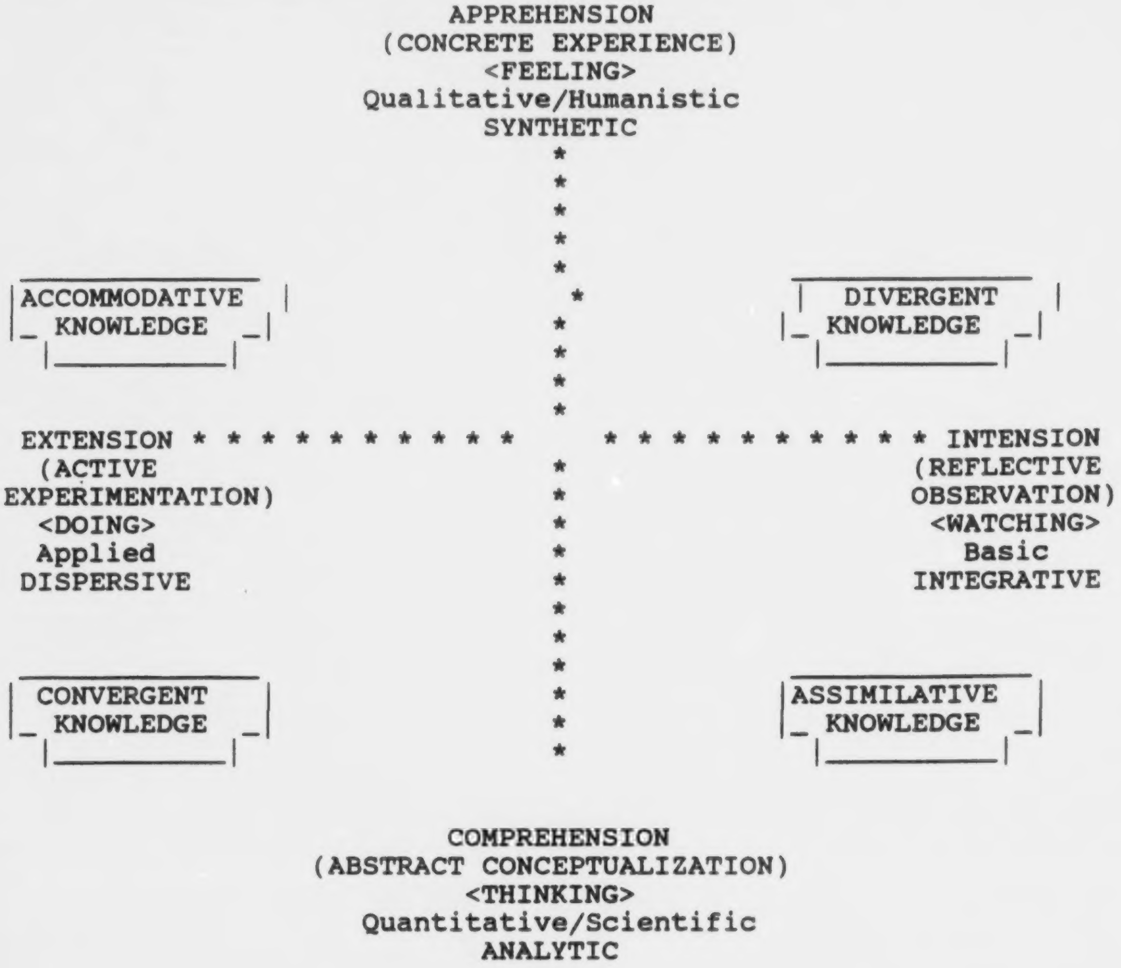
APPREHENSION
(CONCRETE EXPERIENCE)
<FEELING>
Qualitative/Humanistic
SYNTHETIC
ACCOMMODATIVE KNOWLEDGE
DIVERGENT KNOWLEDGE
EXTENSION
(ACTIVE EXPERIMENTATION)
<DOING>
Applied
DISPERSIVE
INTENSION
(REFLECTIVE OBSERVATION)
<WATCHING>
Basic
INTEGRATIVE
CONVERGENT KNOWLEDGE
ASSIMILATIVE KNOWLEDGE
COMPREHENSION
(ABSTRACT CONCEPTUALIZATION)
<THINKING>
Quantitative/Scientific
ANALYTIC

Figure 1

From Kolb (1984)

Kolb has characterized general managers both theoretically and empirically as individuals who by bent or training and experience have a predilection for what he calls an accommodative style. This is a style which is based on both action or active experimentation and a strong basis in the concrete world of feeling. Kolb also holds that a singular style of knowing may not be effective in all situations and that for the highly integrative individual the use of all the modalities of knowing he has proposed is both possible and much more adaptive.

It is particularly interesting to note that those epistemologies which Kolb views as opposite of that wnich generally characterizes managers, that is those types which partake of reflection and abstraction are the very same types which Schon has posited as important in professional training. In his recent work (1983), (1987), Schon notes that

> Many practitioners, locked into a view of themselves as technical experts, find nothing in the work of practice to occasion reflection. They have become too skillful at techniques of selective inattention, junk categories, and situation control techniques which they use to preserve the constancy of their knowledge-in-practice. For them uncertainty is a threat; its admission is a sign of weakness. Others more inclined to and adept at reflection in action nevertheless feel profoundly uneasy because they cannot say what they know how to do, cannot justify its quality or rigor. For these reasons, the study of reflection-in-action is critically important. The dilemma of rigor or relevance may be dissolved if we can develop an epistemology of practice which places technical problem solving within a broader context of reflective inquiry, show how reflection in action may be rigorous in its own right,f and links the art of practice in uncertainty and uniqueness to the scientist's art of research. We may thereby increase the legitimacy of reflection-in-action and encourage its broader, deeper and more rigorous use. (1987).

Hence there is a basic antithesis between the professional's ways of knowing derived from the training that managers receive as professionals and practitioners and that which is needed for effective practice in modern organizations. The resolution of this antithesis requires a new model for the training of practitioners. (Schon, 1987).

Practitioners tend to be educated and sophisticated in their understanding and dedicated to an end. They work in a rapidly changing environment where new complex problems are encountered. They serve clients who have become increasingly demanding in this consumer society. Practitioners want to utilize knowledge and collect data to meet a practical end.

It is our belief that the schism that currently exists between research and practice has weakened both. Researchers are often chasing irrelevant problems and are ignorant of the interesting emerging issues in the field. Practitioners often need useful models, research or theories to aid in the practice of their profession, and these are often nonexistent.

We also believe that the narrowing of this schism could make a positive difference in the practice of the professions and the accumulation of knowledge. The boundaries between these roles must become more permeable. This has begun to happen as practitioners receive more formal education. However, researchers must become aware of the field. This can be accomplished by spending some time practicing in the field. This approach is very similar to organizational action research, that is research whose primary goal is the improvement of organizational conditions and the solution to organizational problems. (French & Bell, 1984; Lewin, 1984; Whyte, 1984).

Researchers can also engage in collaborative research with practitioners. This will provide them with an inside view of practice, and further practitioners' understanding of research. Whyte's (1991) participative action research (PAR) has been extremely effective in this regard.

It is the position taken in this paper that of the various solutions to these problems the most important approach and that which has the greatest potential is one in which practitioners learn new methods of inquiry, to think beyond their current problems and pose models and research questions from their practice. In doing this they need to be more sophisticated in research and measurement methodology so that their conceptualizations will have transferability. They should be systematic in their data gathering approach and thus be able to share their finding with a wider audience including the basic and applied scientists. Finally, they must be able to articulate, doubt and test their own privately held assumptions about their organizational world.

This paper proposes a paradigm which empowers practitioners to practice research to meet their needs and to advance the profession to which they belong. It proposes the integration of practitioner and researcher role as an alternative to the fragmented model which currently exists. In doing so, it draws much from the past tradition of the action researchers as well as the action science approach espoused by Argyris et. al. (1985)

and also the work of Schon (1984). In this way, the needs of individual managers to evaluate their espoused theories and their theories-in-use can be undertaken so that their organizations can function more realistically and can respond more effectively to the need for self examination and change. Although the role of practitioner only and researcher only still have a place in the professions, the proposal attempts to make the boundaries among roles more permeable. This will empower practitioners, through cross-training in scientific methodology to pose problems, seek answers and advance their discipline using techniques usually relegated only to the basic or applied scientist.

This empowerment of individual practitioners is consistent with the contemporary movement we are currently witnessing in organizations when top down decision making is being replaced by bottom up and more collaborative models. This new research process can make the knowledge of the professions more relevant and serve greater organizational and social purposes. Practitioner research can provide useful answers, identify problems to be researched and can result in adding to the body of accumulated knowledge. This can help other practitioners in these turbulent times and provide not only interventions which can make a difference in practice but also the knowledge base which can be useful for basic researchers in pursuing their own ends.

The proposed model for practitioners to undertake research in their practice setting consists of five steps or phases which usually occur in sequence. These phases are represented in figure 2 below.

Figure 2: The Oarm Model

```
 ___________    ___________    _______________    ________    _______
|           |--|           |--|               |--|        |--|       |
|PRACTICING |  |REFLECTING |  |    FINDING    |  |KNOWING |  |ACTING |
|___________|  |___________|  | (RESEARCHING) |  |________|  |_______|
      |                       |_______________|                  |
      |                                                          V
      |                                                          |
      |------------<--------------------------------<------------|
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PRACTICE

Practice is what the professional does. Practice is that set of experiences and ways of understanding that determine the expected and everyday way of behaving of the manager within an organization. This definition not only includes behavior but also the determinants of behavior as well. Practice can be understood by examining three levels of forces that act upon the individual so involved. These forces include individual, organizational and external environmental aspects.

Individual forces refer to the knowledge, values, interests, role definition and role behaviors that the particular manager holds or does with respect to the job and the organization. These are defined in part by training, personality, professional interests and level of development as well as the predominant knowledge orientation that the individual prefers (Kolb, 1984). These individual forces act either in concert with or in contrast to forces that define the organization.

Organizational forces consist of the goals, expected specific standards of practice, organizational culture, image, preferred epistemology, and general value system that constitute the collectivity of people which are the organization. These forces shape the individual through the general socialization techniques that work to modify or alter individuals to fit existing norms and expectations. While these organizational forces do change over time, often the change is quite slow and the nature of the change may not necessarily be adaptive or in the best interest of the organization. While it is the individuals who develop and maintain these organizational forces through formal and informal communication patterns and through selection and retention of individuals, more often than not the totality of these forces are beyond the ken of any single individual. Hence, organizational activities can become non-adaptive and individuals may not possess a clear understanding of how or why problems have occurred or how to change them. The ways of knowing or modal epistemology that is characteristic of the organization may be self-limiting and hence maladaptive.

Very often change is required of organizations because of events outside of the organization in the external environment. This environment consists of existing technology, ethics and values systems, markets for organizational services or products, other organizations, regulatory mechanisms at the city, state, federal or international level as well as models or theories of either technology or organizational functioning. These external forces are in constant change (although the speed of change can vary from one type of organization to another). This change requires that organizations be able to systemically anticipate, sense and respond in order to maintain organizational identity and integrity.

Practice then can be conceived of as a complex and systematic set of understanding and behaviors that constitute the established way of proceeding on the part of individuals as they go about their business. These understandings and behaviors are themselves the result of multiple interacting forces derived from the three sources described above.

Practitioners do their work guided and determined by all three sets of these forces. Most often they do this using tacit understanding or tacit knowledge. Work behavior is often a balancing or compromise of these forces to keep them in homeostasis. This homeostatic condition can be disrupted either gradually or abruptly by a change, breakthrough or modification in or between these sets of forces. For example, a change in the professional practice, such as those presented by the Total Quality Management movement, has led managers as practitioners to change their practice and certainly to question personal and organizational ways of doing and understanding.

The practitioner possesses tacit understanding of practice, of the organization, and of the environmental impact on practice. This tacit understanding is what Schon (1983) calls knowing-in-action. This knowledge is often acquired through the process described by Kolb (1986) as Apprehension, the gathering of knowledge from concrete experience, which is personal and intuitive and often tacit. This understanding makes practitioners knowledgeable change agents and sources of novel answers, new insights to practice problems.

When practice fails to be effective and groups or the organization suffer from inability to sense, diagnose, understand and change, then a model for facilitating change is necessary. The approach for this has often been to find a change agent, a consultant who can be brought in to aid the organization in understanding diagnosis and change.

Without exception the change agent or consultant would come to the organization and begin to observe and examine various aspects of its structure, its processes, its productivity and they way it transforms input or raw material into output or finished product or service. This initial stage involves a focus or an orientation toward data gathering and observation of concrete experience in a personal way. This initial step is devoted to the knowledge gathering process which we have described above as Apprehension, the gathering of knowledge about others through concrete experience so as to create an intuitive and personal knowledge.

The personal model begins with the manager/practitioner as potential change agent. Because of this, the process of understanding or apprehending the organization is shortened. But before change can take place there are many steps in the inquiry process necessary to produce effective change. The first of these begins with the understanding of practice as we have described above.

REFLECTING

Reflecting is defined as a thought occurring in consideration or meditation. Kolb (1984) describes reflective observation as "understanding the meaning of ideas and situations by carefully observing and impartially describing them." It emphasizes understanding as opposed to practical application: a concern with what is true or how things happen. Thus the second step in the model requires that an individual manager step back from practice, from the collection of concrete experiences and reflect on that practice. Schon in his book The Reflective Practitioner (1983) describes reflection-in-action.

> "When we go about the spontaneous, intuitive performance of the action of everyday life, we show ourselves to be knowledgeable in a special way. Often we cannot say what it is that we know. When we try to describe it we find ourselves at a loss, or we produce descriptions that are obviously inappropriate. Our knowing is ordinarily tacit, implicit in our patterns of action and in our feel for the stuff with which we are dealing. It seems right to say that our knowing is in our action.
>
> Similarly, the workaday life of the professional depends on tacit knowing-in-action. Every competent practitioner can recognize phenomena--families of symptoms associated with a particular disease, peculiarities of a certain kind of building site, irregularities of materials or structure--for which he (she) cannot give a reasonably accurate or complete description. In his day-to-day practice he makes innumerable judgments of quality for which he cannot state adequate criteria, and he displays skills for which he cannot state the rules and procedures...On the other hand, both ordinary people and professional practitioners often think about what they are doing, sometimes even while doing it. Stimulated by surprise, they turn thought back on action and on the knowing which is implicit in action. They may ask themselves, for example, 'What features do I notice when I recognize this thing? What are the criteria by which I make this judgement? What procedures am I enacting when I perform this skill? How am I framing the problem that I am trying to solve?'"

The reflecting phase is composed of multiple substages including both a framing as well as an explorative substage. Reflection is the point where problem awareness begins. It is the beginning of the framing of problem. Kolb would call the kind of knowledge generated by this activity divergent knowledge. That is knowing which is informed by the meaning and values of a particular set of individuals within an organizational setting. It is in this domain of knowing that the internal practitioner consultant has the greatest advantage because the wealth of concrete experience, to be transformed by reflection essentially already exists. Divergent thinking is probably quite close to the kind of connected knowing described by Belenky et. al. (1969). It is in this modality that alternative views of organizational reality can be entertained and perhaps a single gestalt developed. This gestalt is intuitive, it is composed of a complex of ideas, causal connections of multifold variables. It is colored by values derived from a history of working and being socialized in an organization knowing what is possible and what is acceptable given the politics and culture.

This stage occurs because expected results of a particular kind did not occur. A prior form of practice which involved acting or behaving within the organization has ceased to produce the kind of expected results. As Argyris, Putnam and Smith (1985) have described it:

> " Drawing on these ideas, we can now sketch a more comprehensive and dynamic model of the epistemology of practice. The agent, confronted with a complex, puzzling, and ambiguous set of circumstances, draws on tacit knowledge to frame the situation and act. The consequences of this action generate information about the situation and about the suitability of the framing and action of the agent. The

> agents interprets this information, again drawing on tacit knowledge. If the action-as-probe generates information inconsistent with the original framing, if the action-as-move does not achieve intended consequences or leads to unintended consequences, or if the action as hypothesis is disconfirmed, the agent may be led to reflect on the tacit understanding that informed the original framing and action. This reflection may or may not lead to a reframing of the situation and a new sequence of moves."

Problem framing within reflection is beginning of the process that a scientist would call theory construction. It is the internal search for understanding of phenomena in terms of cause and effect relations so that control can be regained. In this case, we refer to control of organizational processes that may have gone awry. In order to accomplish this understanding, tacit theory, that which we hold in an unreflective way needs to be made explicit and overt. The process for doing this requires several steps. A detailed presentation of this is beyond the scope of this paper. However, in brief, the process involves the active work of writing one's observations of concrete experience as well as writing out in considerable detail the implicit causal model or models that inform understanding of the problem. It is crucial that this be done in a written form, because the next step in reflection is to explore, to undertake secondary research, that is library research, looking at the ways others have theorized about such problems and the kinds of concepts and constructs they have used. However, reading others' research can modify or change one's understanding and can even lead to a reframing or altered perception of the problem. This may or may not be helpful. In order to maintain the original integrity of the original observations, the basic concrete experiences and the reflected theories that related these to each other must be written. In a thesis this would be a detailed description of the concrete problem.

The next aspect that follows the framing of the problem is exploration. With a framed questions the practitioner explores the body of accumulated knowledge to discover alternative ways of naming or conceptualizing the problem. The discovery of new ways of conceptualizing may produce a new consciousness about the problem. It is this secondary background research and exploration that enhances the reflection process and begins the process Kolb calls abstract conceptualization. The practitioner approaches the exploration of accumulated knowledge at this stage much as a researcher would. The difference is the practitioner's inquiry began from practice; a researcher usually begins with a knowledge of the discipline and is looking to test a logically derived hypothesis.

Practitioners have methods of exploration in addition to library research which lead to problem framing. These include interviews with other knowledgeable or experienced practitioners. Particularly useful are interviews with practitioners who have experienced a solution to the problem. Collaboration with an informed third party such as an academic or consultant can also be a useful approach. The initial exploration can produce models or theories which approximate (or are analogous to) the problem encountered. Schon calls these exemplars. Kolb calls the type of knowledge which derives from reflection and causal analysis assimilative knowledge.

These two steps in the reflective process, framing and exploration are interactive, with each one informing the other in a circular pattern until the practitioner is comfortable with the fit of the problem as framed. The result of this stage is a research question, framed by the practitioner in the context of accumulated knowledge. The role played by the practitioner in this step is that of the reflective practitioner. The practitioner has moved from tacit practice to understanding the problem.

FINDING

The third stage of the model is that of finding. In this stage the practitioner plays the role of a researcher and moves from understanding the problem to a data-based knowledge of the problem in its organizational context. The various steps in this stage are quite similar to those taken by an independent researcher. The practitioner would further explore in a focused manner his or her current understanding of the problem. This exploration would include further library research and probing and inquiry within the organization. Probing and inquiry may also involve some data collection techniques such as a sensing interview, process observation, and ethnographic data collection. Practitioners have an advantage in using these techniques based on their acceptance as a participant and their holistic understanding of the organizational context. Based on their acceptance as participants, and their holistic understanding of the organizational context, a study is then designed. The same rules and decision considerations of scientific inquiry are present in the present approach as they would be in any research design. Issues such as internal and external validity, measurement reliability and validity are extant in this research setting which will be done in an operating organization. This "in vivo" setting presents the same constraints and problems that are found in action research. Hence, the practitioner must very often make methodological choices which force compromises which can threaten the internal and external validity of the study. The final aspect of this stage is the data collection summary and analysis.

KNOWING

The fourth stage is that of knowing. It is in this stage that the practitioner integrates the knowledge gained through all other stages. The first step is to interpret the data that was analyzed in the prior stage. The practitioner then integrates the tacit knowledge from practice, the reflection from the second stage, the accumulated knowledge discovered, and the data collected in the Finding stage. This integration takes place in the context of tacit understanding of the three forces, personal, external and organizational. Practitioners integrate this knowledge in the assimilative and divergent and convergent modes (as described by Kolb).

The roles played in this stage are multiple and include theorist, reflective practitioner, data analyst and model builder. Hence, the practitioner moves from being a researcher to becoming an expert in the situation. The practitioner has knowledge from many domains and now has an informed basis for generating policy alternatives and for choosing among alternative action possibilities.

ACTING

In this final stage the practitioner uses the informed basis for action. The roles played are that of change agent and expert. The steps are to plan for implementation and evaluation, to actually implement, to gather evaluative data through feedback and evaluative mechanisms. Hence, the practitioner moves from expert in the situation to experimenter and informed practitioner. The resultant action may be a change in the system, implementation of a new model or practice, growth in knowledge, or, in the event the implementation was not effective, a clearer understanding of the situation which arises from action.

This final kind of knowledge is what Kolb calls accommodative. It partakes of the resultant of active experimentation or action in conjunction with the apprehension of the results of action. Hence, the practitioner/scientist returns to being a practitioner, more informed in the area as a result of the cycle.

In conclusion, just as any scientifically based system of inquiry tends to be repetitive, self-correcting and open ended, so too, the model proposed above would have these same characteristics. To be sure, there are many aspects of the model which we have not covered in this presentation that are of considerable import. These include but are not limited to issues of values in the choice of action alternatives, ethical problems and considerations in doing organizational research, a specific methodology for examining ones own and others' constructs in the organizational diagnosis process as well as the multifold difficulties that reside in any self-diagnostic activity.

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APPLYING THE PRINCIPLES OF ADULT LEARNING IN THE MANAGEMENT OF AN ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

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ABSTRACT

The following article asks what would happen if a College treated its Administrative Staff as adult learners and is provided as background for a workshop to be presented at the Alliance Conference in October of 1991. The workshop which will be presented by the author with a member of the Administrative Staff of the School for New Learning. It will include the sharing of our story, from both perspectives in order to create conversation around possible applications to the various contexts of the workshop participants.

INTRO

In my two years as Coordinator of Administration in the School for New Learning (SNL), I have noticed a difference in the attitude and behavior toward our administrative staff, compared with the attitude of management toward staff in the rest of DePaul. While SNL does not have a corner on good managment and there are those who share our ideas in other parts of the University, there is something noticeably different here. In reflecting about this, it occurred to me that the philosophy that influences our work with adult learners has also influenced our interaction with the staff, and in fact, is most helpful in the smooth running of the college.

Idea in hand, I went to an article by Catherine Marienau and Arthur Chickering titled "Adult Development and Learning" to revisit the general principles of adult learning, and held those principles up to the light of my experience at the School for New Learning. I will use the School as a case study to examine what underlying principles of adult learning (consciously or unconsciously) shape our administrative structure, and evaluate how effectively they are being applied. This paper focuses on three areas: structural shift and distribution of work, culture, and accumulation of skill.

THE SCHOOL FOR NEW LEARNING

The School for New Learning was founded 19 years ago to serve adult students in the pursuit of a Bachelor of Arts degree, adding a Master of Arts degree five years ago. The programs are individualized, competence based, and geared toward working professionals who both want and oftentimes need, a liberal arts perspective to round out their professional expertise. They come with varied abilities and styles, requiring flexibility on the part of the College, both in helping them individualize their program, and in providing administrative support to make it happen.

The initial administrative structure of the school was along traditional lines with a Dean, faculty/administrative positions, visiting faculty, and clerical staff. Decisions were made at the management level and implemented by the staff. As long as the school remained small this method of operation with its ease of access to all on staff, served the college well. However, enrollment growth necessitated change in the administrative structure.

FRAMING THE QUESTION

As my understanding of the College and the University grew, certain questions became more persistent. I wondered why decisions were made without adequate consultation, or without asking the people who actually did the work, or were involved in the experience. I wondered why management would attempt to design systems without including those who deal directly with the students on a day to day basis. I wondered what would happen if the Administrative Management focused on the equality of people, while recognizing the different levels of responsibility connected with each role? What would the environment look like? What would happen if we focused on the different learning styles of our staff members? In essence, what would happen if the staff were treated as adult learners: This became the central question for the major tasks of structural reorganization and managing rapid growth. How would it help us facilitate the work flow? How would understanding these issues help SNL deal with its rapid growth and the resulting stress?

STRUCTURAL SHIFT AND DISTRIBUTION OF WORK

In the Fall of 1987, the Administrative Staff of SNL included 11 Administrative Management positions, 4 full-time faculty, 95 part-time faculty, and 5 administrative staff. By 1991, the full time faculty had grown to 18, part-time to 125, and the staff to 11. (see Fig. I)

It was a good thing we had increased our staff. The overall enrollment in the school year '88/'89 grew 25% and the credit hour count, 30%. In the school year '89/'90 the overall enrollment increase began to taper off to a more manageable 7%, but the credit hour growth was still up a significant 20%. (see fig. #2)

As it did for all faculty and staff of the College, these figures meant substantial workload increases for the Administrative Staff. Increased enrollments meant increased admissions, registrations, and all that follows. Increased credit hours meant more add/drops and grades to process. The credit hour count in '90/90 (26,006) represents the fact that the administrative staff processed overall that year 13,003 grades. Processing these grades took maximum effort and pinpoint accuracy in a short period of time at each quarter's end. The number of classes offered rose 58%, with 25% additional faculty needing support for a myriad of responsibilities. These are only a few examples of the impact to the Administrative Staff.

Without the gift of this hindsight, still unaware of the exact figures, but accutely aware of the increased number of students, the School began to rethink its organizational structure and look for ways to improve efficiency. Simply hiring more administrative assistants to serve a growing staff and faculty would not necessarily be cost effective. We needed more help, yes, but in the words of then Assistant Dean, Toni Gaines, who spearheaded this effort, we needed to "work smarter, not harder."

The school evolved a "flat-line" organization, one where people are treated equally and respected as individuals, but one where responsibilities are different. It required input from all levels to make decisions. Rather than administratively ordering clerical decisions from the limited experience of management, we began to recognize the necessity of a clear understanding of the current clerical processes, and the need to consider the consequences to all, of any decisions we were considering. It helped us to become more proactive and less reactive. We were able to anticipate problems before they arose, and to make adjustments.

This is an important shift. While some of the more senior administrative staff members utilized this programmatic approach to their responsibilities, now all do. Each person is accountable for his/her piece of the support at their level of responsibility, but each person depends on another for parts of information. It encompasses learning from experience, lessens competition, and promotes teamwork. It allows staff to work interdependently from the strength of their own style, while at the same time providing help for them when necessary.

A good example is in the area of registration. In the past, one administrative management person would work individually with several different staff members regarding their piece of the registration process. This resulted in some decisions being made without adequate information in regard to the effect those decisions would have on other parts of the process. Staff actually doing the work would not always have an opportunity to reflect on the ideas and offer their impressions of the impact different decisions might have on their particular area of responsibility. So, a task force was formed with all members of the Administrative Management and Staff involved in the registration process, from curriculum development through the processing of add/drops for the creation of final rosters. This task force determined what the problems were in the overall process and laid out the progression of steps, from beginning to end in the registration process for a given quarter. We clarified who was responsible for what piece of the process and laid out a schedule. Fig. 3 is an example of the Fall '91 schedule. It is produced by working backwards from the day the registration letter is mailed to the date we need to begin preparing that letter for mailing. Fig. 4 consists of a schedule of important dates and deadlines faculty and staff need to meet during the quarter. It is distributed to staff and mailed with faculty contracts. These schedules, revised and circulated quarterly, help all involved stay on task. With these responsibilities clarified and deadlines set, the task force gives way to project management which is more of a maintenance approach. The project manager is responsible to assure that deadlines are met, and to re-convene the task force for necessary information sharing, or systems redesign.

This method of operation names the problems, creates effective solutions, provides efficient service to students, improves communication, and enables staff to work smarter, not harder. Since all are part of the decisions made, all have a vested interest in seeing that the project is successful. Everyone knows what to do, when to do it, who is involved in each part of the process, and the desired outcome. We began to tackle other parts of the program in a similar manner with like results, with first attention paid to the most troublesome.

CULTURE

The new culture which was birthed in the tremendous growth of the College and the resulting change in administrative structure, has not been an easy adjustment. Today we number 37 in a space 150% greater than that occupied in '87. Our Resident Faculty has more than tripled and our Admissions are up 20%. We would be less than honest if we did not admit to still struggling with this change overall. Change is difficult and can surface resentment. It can create a strong desire to play "remember when." Old habits are hard to break and staff members with longevity can be the hardest to win over. Factions can break off, and camps can form. A clear understanding of the shifts in responsibility combined with good communication skills in order to hear and be heard, go a long way to prevent such situations.

In the past with fewer people and smaller space, communication happened more quickly and easily, resulting in immediate problem solving. Lower volume enabled staff to stay with a problem until it was resolved. Clarification was done on the spot, resulting in a feeling of accomplishment to students and staff. Now, with our enlarged staff and space, locating someone when you need them, is not as easy as it once was. Because there is some lag time between the initial request and our ability to resolve it, thereby delaying resolution, it feels like we are not accomplishing as much. But in reality, the volume of grades, registrations, and student problems is greater and takes more time.

More people also creates more opportunities for different interpretations of information or events, and less opportunity to get to know each other well. Listening and clarification become more important.

While each staff member has a good generalist knowledge of the program, they now defer to their colleagues on those pieces of the support with which they are not familiar. This requires a strong interdependence. The person taking the message must trust that the person to whom they give the request, will handle it promptly and efficiently. For that is what the staff member who answered the phone assured the caller.

To assist us in acquiring better communication skills, we have concentrated on communication in our staff development. All staff took the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and we had a follow-up in-service day explaining the different types. We enjoyed immensely learning about ourselves and each other. As a result of that day, the staff became more aware of the importance of understanding each other and how their individual personalities could impact their work with each other and students. They requested more information about communication, so we followed up with a day on active listening, concentrating on the two-part process of giving and receiving information. This was a new concept to most of the staff, and one which will require more follow-up, continued input, and more practice.

The areas where the skill of active listening is needed most is in the daily interaction among staff. Not only do they need to clearly hear each other and students, they need to be able to identify troublesome interactions, and offer constructive criticism to each other. This will keep small aggravations from becoming big ones.

Another area where we have emphasized communication is in the staff performance appraisals. These are designed to hear from each staff person about their position, his/her ideas about redesigning their piece of the program, and to give them feedback on their performance. This feedback is structured to be at least 90% positive. It outlines briefly the individual's responsibility, identifies areas which are working well, provides feedback on skills and behaviors, and identifies areas needing attention from which goals for the year can be determined.

SKILLS

One of the most apparent changes in the environment, that of interdependence, necessitates team-building skills, better understanding and anticipation of workload, and requires a culture where cooperation and autonomy work side-by-side. The staff learned: to articulate problems with clarity, when they could take care of problems and when they could not, and where to go to get help when they needed it. Problem solving became a team effort. The growth was so rapid, more rapid than anticipated or planned for, that systems required streamlining and new systems that had not been thought of before were created to keep on top of things. The staff began to handle the day to day operation with maturity and flexibility - interestingly, two of the requirements of students for admission to the program. They felt confident that they would be heard, and that together, a solution could be reached. They understood that students were our customers, and that their needs were to be served to the best of our ability.

The skills required in this shift are numerous. Staff persons need to be mature and able to stand on their own. They need to be comfortable enough in their own knowledge and skill to listen to new ideas and not feel judged or criticized. They need to be able to communicate verbally, non-verbally, and in writing - both as giver and receiver of information. They need to be able to organize and balance many tasks at once, sometimes taking large pieces of the program and breaking them down to "doable" tasks. They need to be detail oriented, but able to stand back and look at the larger context in which those details function. They need to respect and be respected. They need to trust each other enough to get the work done. They need to be cooperative but not allow themselves to be used. They need to understand and buy into the mission of the College. They need to have a manageable workload and be able to go home and forget work for balance in a person's life is important. They need to be able to give constructive criticism to their peers and to receive it as well.

Nowhere were this knowledge and skill demonstrated more clearly than at a planning day held for the college in the Fall of 1989. The different constituencies of SNL: Administrative Management, Administrative Staff, Full-time Faculty, Visiting Faculty, and representative Students and Alumnae gathered to discuss our interdependence. Each group had met prior to the day and appointed spokespersons to share with the others the special gifts and skills they bring to the College, but also what they need. Two of the Administrative Staff shared that as a staff they did not feel respected. They were articulate in outlining behaviors which they felt lessened the importance of their work and diminished them personally. They cited missed deadlines and absence from the School without checking in for messages or leaving a number where one could be reached, as particular behaviors which put the staff between the student and the other members of the

College, and in the position of not being able to do their job.

It took great courage and sense of self to be able to convey this information in front of a group and do it with dignity and respect for themselves and others. It was not delivered with rancor, rather with an honesty and a desire to resolve a difficult issue. These two spokespersons were able to do so because they had a team behind them who reached consensus, named the issue, and empowered them to speak for the group.

RESULTS

When reviewing these skills, one cannot help but notice the comparison with the skills of a lifelong learner. This "jewel" of any liberal arts education is contained in the Lifelong Learning steps of SNL as follows:

-mature and flexible, good sense of self, able to set short term goals
-able to make independent decisions, to set forth a learning plan
-able to think critically
-able to read, write, and speak with clarity

-able to research

-able to manage deadlines and organize work

-able to work and learn independently on projects

-able to set goals for the future

These skills are fostered in an environment which:

-recognizes, respects, and builds on the experience of the learner,

-creates a climate for active involvement in learning-decision making,

-facilitates collaborative efforts,

-provides timely, open feedback, and

-emphasizes responsibility for learning over "doing it right".

It seems to me that bearing in mind these principles and exploring ways they can be implemented in the administration of our Colleges, can and does benefit all involved. It applies not only at the Administrative Staff level, but at all levels of administration. In fact, the impact could be even more far-reaching at greater levels of responsibility.

COLLEGE GROWTH

1987-1991

Fig 1

CATEGORY	FALL '87	FALL '91	% CHANGE
Adm. Mgmt.	11	9	-18%
FT Faculty	4	18	+350%
PT Faculty	95	125	+32%
Adm. Staff	5	11	+120%
Total Staff	19	37	+95%
Total Space	4,333 sq. ft.	10,878 sq. ft.	+150%
Admissions	340	410	+20%
Classes Offered	43	68	+58%

ENROLLMENT/CREDIT HOURS COMPARISON

Fig 2.

	SUMMER		FALL		WINTER		SPRING		YR TOTAL	YR TOTAL	% Inc.
	ENR.	CR. HRS	ENR.	CR. HRS	ENR.	CR. HRS	ENR.	CR. HRS	ENR.	CR. HRS	
1988/89	488	2,024	960	4,762	938	4,690	994	5,137	3,340	16,613	
1989/90	673	2,916	1,196	5,988	1,142	6,104	1,178	6,564	4,189	21,572	+30%
1990/91	691	3,796	1,262	6,838	1,273	7,202	1,262	7,170	4,488	26,006	+20%

REGISTRATION LETTER SCHEDULE
FALL '91- '92
UG/MA
Fig. 3

June 10th	Initial meeting for Fall, BA/MA Curriculum due	ALL CM/MF
June 10th (week of)	Registration letter initially revised, edited as needed	LW/JM
June 22nd	Status check - final review of (JM/DOJ) reg, ltr. due to LW	ALL
June 24th	Final in-house prep of week-at-a-glance	LW
June 24th	Final curriculum changes due	MF/LW
July 1st	Status check meeting	ALL
July 8th	Editing of Reg. Ltr with wordprocessing final review of week-at-a-glance	LW
July 15th (week of)	Prepare data base	JP
July 15th	Status check	ALL
July 19th	Reg. Ltr to reprographics - Env. & Reg. forms ordered	LW
July 29th	SNL Registrations mailed	AIDES
August 7th	DPU Fall registration begins	LW/REG

FACULTY CHECK LIST

Fig. 4

QUARTER FALL 1991/92

JUNE 27	CONTRACTS, BOOK ORDERS, TAX FORMS TO FACULTY
JULY 15	CONTRACTS DUE BACK TO MARY ANN
JULY 15	BOOK ORDER DUE BACK TO MARY ANN
JULY 26	MASTERS TO BE PHOTOCOPIED DUE TO MARY ANN
SEPT. 9	QUARTER BEGINS CLASSES BEGIN THIS WEEK -CLASS PACKETS FOR LOOP CAMPUS CLASSES TO BE PICKED UP AT THE SNL OFFICE THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS -CLASS PACKETS FOR SUBURBAN CAMPUSES WILL BE IN THE CLASSROOM THE FIRST NIGHT OF CLASS
SEPT. 20	ACCURATE ATTENDANCE, COMPETENCE SHEETS DUE IN SNL OFFICE ATTN: LINDA WAINWRIGHT
SEPT. 23	TUITION REIMBURSEMENT FORMS DUE TO SANDRA BOWEN
SEPT. 26	MONEY FOR EXTRA PHOTOCOPYING DUE
OCT. 7	MIDDLE OF TERM
NOV. 5	FINAL GRADE ROSTERS MAILED TO FACULTY STUDENT EVALUATIONS OF COURSE TO BE HANDED OUT BY THE 9TH WEEK OF CLASS (TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE SNL OFFICE BY STUDENT)
NOV. 18	QUARTER ENDS
NOV. 22	FINAL GRADES DUE
DEC. 6	FINAL ASSESSMENT FORMS DUE
DEC. 13	LAST PAYDAY (IF ALL ASSESSMENTS AND GRADES ARE IN)
NOTE:	OTHER PAYDAYS IN THE QUARTER ARE: SEPT. 20, OCT. 4, OCT. 18 NOV. 1, NOV 15, NOV. 27

Track D

Expanding Our Approaches to Inquiry

TEACHING INQUIRY AS A LIFELONG LEARNING SKILL

John Rury, Associate Professor
Phyllis Walden, Associate Professor
School for New Learning
DePaul University

Inquiry is central to lifelong learning as it is built into the undergraduate curriculum of the School for New Learning (SNL). There are several dimensions of inquiry that students explore as they pursue successive stages of the program. In this workshop we will describe inquiry as a lifelong learning skill and demonstrate strategies for teaching inquiry. We will use the SNL program as a framework for understanding inquiry as a lifelong learning skill but will also discuss ways of applying these insights to other program models.

Inquiry entails asking questions and finding answers to them. Relevant skills include question framing, hypothesis development, resource identification, the formulation of pertinent research methodologies and learning strategies, and self assessment. These abilities are developed in a series of discrete learning process steps in SNL, which for most students are organized sequentially. We will focus on several key points in this developmental process as a way to stimulate discussion of inquiry as a part of alternative undergraduate education.

We will demonstrate two teaching strategies that assist students in asking questions, generating hypotheses, identifying further steps in inquiry, and assessing their success with the process.

"Twenty Questions" is a participatory classroom activity that illustrates how to bring out assumptions that are guiding inquiry. Through examining an everyday example and asking yes or no questions, participants will experience a teaching and learning strategy that shows how inquiry is driven by assumptions. This activity is useful in helping adults become more fully aware of the power and limitations of hypotheses, and can be linked to the development of an hypothesis in more formal research.

Using problem-based learning to solve a mystery introduces participants to an interactive inquiry strategy that helps students frame questions, identify assumptions, develop an inquiry strategy, and assess their learning.

INQUIRY AS LIFELONG LEARNING SKILL

This demonstration will include a brief overview of problem-based learning, a collaborative inquiry process developed by Dr. Howard Barrows and is widely used in medical education. Participants will use this process to solve a mystery, and examine how the detective metaphor can be used in a variety of courses to introduce students to inquiry.

Following these interactive demonstrations, participants will be asked to identify possibilities for the use of these and similar strategies in their own programs. Sample syllabi, School for New Learning program materials, detailed descriptions of these two teaching strategies, and suggested resources for teaching inquiry will be provided.

We will discuss the curricular implications of making inquiry a major focal point of the undergraduate experience. Educated adults today are expected to engage in systematic inquiry and to evaluate the results of research as citizens, employees, consumers, and parents. Insofar as lifelong learning is a goal of adult higher education, the process of framing questions and answering them should be a major focus of the curriculum.

We will close with consideration of curricular implications for different types of programs, making inquiry a major objective of undergraduate education. Participants will be asked to consider a range of questions. How might such outcomes be accomplished in different types of programs? To what extent does a focus on inquiry preclude other curricular objectives? What are institutional/organizational obstacles to changes such as these? And just how should the various elements of inquiry be treated in different settings?

We hope to stimulate colleagues from across the country to think about inquiry as a problem in alternative undergraduate curricula. We expect to get a good deal of feedback about particular strategies and techniques of teaching inquiry skills, and to facilitate the sharing of additional strategies. Finally, we hope to assist others in reflecting on the issue of inquiry in their own teaching, advising, curricular development and program design efforts.

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Critical Perspectives:
Teaching Great Books and Religious Studies to Adults

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I

MALCOLM My liege,
They are not yet come back. But I have spoke
With one that saw him die; who did report
That very frankly he confessed his treasons,
Implored your Highness' pardon, and set forth
A deep reprentance. Nothing in his life
Became him like the leaving it. He died
As one that had been studied in his death
To throw away the dearest thing he owed
As 'twere a careless trifle.
KING There's no art
To find the mind's construction in the face.
He was a gentleman on whom I built
An absolute trust.
Macbeth, I,iv

I am talking of the common life which is the real life (117).
Virginia Woolf

To have character then, is to enter at a new level the realm of morality, the level at which one's person, with its continuities, its interconnections, its integrity, is intimately involved in one's deeds (30).
James Wm. McClendon, Jr.

When Duncan, King of Scotland, asks his son Malcolm in the first act of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* two simple questions which could be answered with "yes" or "no"

("Is execution done on Cawdor? Are not/ Those in commission yet returned?"), Malcolm responds by telling a brief story. The story occassions some of Shakespeare's most well-known lines which describe both particulars of the Thane of Cawdor's life and apply to those reading the play today. Cawdor, according to Malcolm's second-hand version, "confessed . . . , Implored . . . pardon, and set forth/ A deep repentance." Hearing this classic spiritual progression in story form is sufficient to cause the King to consider the "absolute trust" of their relationship. Stories that can be trusted construct language and build community.

Wendell Berry makes precisely this point in his magnificent book of essays, Standing By Words, in which he writes that this "word-keeping, standing by one's word, is a double fidelity: to the community and to oneself" (100) . Telling one's story may occassion fidelity to language, to oneself, and to community. The process of story-telling links the great books course and the religious studies course in the School of Extended Education at Saint Mary's College in California.

II

Saint Mary's College has supported the education of adult learners for the past fifteen years. In undergraduate bachelors' degree programs for management and health services administration, we presently have six hundred eighteen students, approximately evenly divided between men and women, with about thirty-eight percent non-Caucasian students. Students entering these fields have already earned half (sixty) of their undergraduate units. Most of them petition through credit for prior learning for the equivalent of their junior year credit. In clusters averaging eighteen students each, students work together for fifty weeks of classes, taking an introductory portfolio class, classes in their major, and two liberal arts classes known as Critical Perspectives I and Critical Perspectives II. These latter two courses meet transfer requirements in religious studies and our equivalent of a great books course, known on-campus as the Collegiate Seminar. The first course begins on the twenty-sixth week of the students' academic year and the second course concludes their fifty classes together.

The Critical Perspectives faculty consists of approximately forty part-time instructors, most of whom hold doctorates in some discipline within the humanities. Seven full-time on-campus faculty occassionally teach Critical Perspectives courses. Since Critical Perspectives II satisfies a religious studies requirement, only faculty with graduate study in theology are eligible to teach this course. In order to preserve the spirit of a single, unified college, we have endeavored to model our classes with at least one eye toward the on-campus community, which has been the intellectual source of both these classes. The Chair of Critical Perspectives is a full-time tenure track position, with responsibilities teaching in both the regular on-campus classes as well as classes in the School of Extended Educaiton (off-campus). The Chair sits on the Governing Board for the Collegiate Seminar and also convenes an Advisory Board for Critical Perspectives. This Board was created to give continuity to the curriculum and to be able to respond specifically to the needs of adult learners. The Critical Perspectives Advisory Board has the final authority with regard to the curriculum in both Critical Perspectives courses.

The Critical Perspectives faculty faces the interesting problems addressed by the proponents of cultural literacy: with an increasing non-western and female student population, we regularly ask ourselves to what extent can we continue to limit ourselves to the original "canon" of the great books of western Europe? Both on-campus and off-campus facutly debate this topic with great zeal. However, our students are often not so concerned about the debate with nearly the same intensity as the faculty. In most cases, feminists have been our most articulate and vocal critcs; non-Caucasian students have not, in general, challenged our rather conservative canon. This lack of challenge may be due to the fact that our students are primarily up-wardly mobile in class aspirations and they are reluctant to challenge anything so fundamental about a course since it may threaten their evaluation. It is also possible that criticism is somewhat deferred since the ethnic diversity in Critical

Perspectives II addresses this need. The Critical Perspectives faculty changes the curriculum annually on the basis of its own deliberations in accordance with its Advisory Board. Currently the syllabus for Critical Perspectives I is:

first session (half-class)	The Book of Job, The Gospel of Mark, or Sappho (selections)
second session	Sophocles, Antigone Oedipus the King Oedipus at Colonus Plato, Euthyphro Apology Crito Phaedo Aristophanes, The Clouds or Lysistrata
third session	Machiavelli, The Prince Shakespeare, Macbeth
fourth session	Tolstoy, The Death of Ivan Ilyich Dostoyevsky, Notes from the Underground "The Grand Inquisitor"
fifth session	Morrison, The Bluest Eye Woolf, To the Lighthouse

Critical Perspectives is an accelerated course. Each session is four hours long. The total length of class time for Critical Perspectives I is eighteen hours; for Critical Perspectives II, sixteen hours. Thus, in curricular matters, we face the challenge of representing various aspects of the great books in an amount of class time which is slightly less than half of the class time for our on-campus classes (thirty-nine hours). We justify the shorter class time on our having found that adult students are able to read and discuss with more depth than our younger students [essay excerpts following in section IV will demonstrate this point]. Adult motivation is frequently very high and the sheer amount as well as the quality of their life experience enhance their ability and desire to respond to these texts.

What is not evident from the syllabus above are the textstried and presently omitted. A classic difference arose between the faculty and the Advisory Board around the use of Dante's Inferno. The Critical Perspectives faculty agreed with the on-campus faculty that doing the Inferno without the Purgatorio or the Paradiso violated one of the commonly held tenets of great books curricula: whenever possible, we try to read complete works. In addition, the level of contextual information required to understand Dante is very high. A second commonly held tenet of the great books is that secondary sources are not necessary to the reading. Some on-campus faculty prohibit students from reading secondary material in the purest compliance with the great books tradition; others discourage it, while the smallest minority might encourage reading secondary sources. Finally, in the case of Dante, student evaluations were frequently most negative; as part of the curriculum, students found Dante to reenforce the perception that Critical Perspectives I was dark, negative, or weighted inordinately toward the tragic. These concerns in faculty discussion, proved more convincing, at least for the present, than arguments about the irreplaceable importance of Dante in the history of western civilization, his centrality between the middle ages and the Renaissance, the significance of his perception of the individual (cf. Singleton's argument), or his multi-tiered use of language (cf. Auerbach).

Another writer whose work has gone in and out of our reading list is Henry David Thoreau. Faculty have been enthusiastic to keep Thoeau in the reading list, often arguing for him as a distinctive American voice with spiritual and radical political ideals. But our students, who tend to be upwardly mobile, see Thoreau as a spokesperson urging movement in a directly opposite economic direction. Firmly rooted in American pragmatism, however unconscious, our students sometimes want degrees in order to prepare them for promotions; often, and frequently simultaneously, their degrees stand for the satisfaction of inner goals, achieving "the road not taken" in their youth, or simply catching up with privileges sometimes held first by their own children. Thoreau's journey to Walden Pond and his concurrent insistence on simplicity remind students of hippies from the sixties. His short stay in the Concord jail seems to them nothing to be taken very seriously. Whatever the truth might be of these statements by Thoreau -- and I personally believe it to be near absolute

-- Thoreau's language is so direct and unambiguous that we as a faculty have yet to find a way to make it able to be heard positively by the majority of our students. This representative sample should make this point clear:

> [A] man is rich in proportion to the number of things which he can afford to let alone. . . . Why should we be in such desperate haste to succeed, and in such desperate enterprise. . . ? Say what you have to say, not what you ought. Any truth is better than make-believe. . . . Love your life, poor as it is. You may perhaps have some pleasant, thrilling, glorious hours, even in a poor house. The setting sun is reflected from the windows of the almshouse as brightly as from the rich man's abode; the snow melts before its door as early in the spring. I do not see but a quiet mind may live as contentedly there, and have as cheering thoughts, as in a palace. . . . Cultivate poverty like a garden herb, like sage. Do not trouble yourself much to get new things, whether clothes or friends (126, 374, 376-7).

"Cultivate poverty" is a phrase which only our more advanced students are able to hear in its admittedly controversial sense. Adult students see the spiritual value of poverty much more clearly when we read Gandhi or speak of Mother Theresa in Critical Perspectives II. Thoreau's native American speech is clear. One may be tempted here to fault the accelerated nature of our program, realizing that part of student resistance stems from having to read over four hundred pages of nineteenth century prose and write a paper in response to it in less than a week (holding down a full-time job and maintaining some sense of family). Yet my experience shows that even when I assign only a fragment of the text, the clash between students' values and Thoreau's is unavoidable and makes it difficult to produce positive educational results. We isolate assumptions, compare ours with his, and students in general prefer to stay with their own. Notable exceptions prove the rule.

In this curriculum, Sophocles, Plato, Machiavelli and Macbeth have been constant for at least ten years. The Book of Job was the standard opening text for many years, introducing the theme of suffering for the rest of the course. Another standard first class assignment has been the Declaration of Independence, which has been used creatively along with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; other texts used have been Aristotle's Politics, Plutarch's Pompey, Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations, James Joyce's Dubliners, Marx and Engels' The Communist Manifesto, Tocqueville's Democracy in America. The shift has been noticeably away from politics and economics toward works of imaginative literature. More recently, Woolf's A Room of One's Own has been used successfully, and we are just beginning to use To the Lighthouse and Toni Morrison's The Bluest Eye. We have had positive responses to the use of short stories, especially Alice Walker's "Rose-Lily." Fiction and drama have proved to be most popular with faculty and students, perhaps reflecting the abundance of literature doctorates in our faculty or the suitability of these genres for this method. Fiction and drama presume less formal prerequisites than science, for instance. However, in an attempt to broaden student and faculty perceptions of the great books, we have begun a reader in which we have included writings that consider twentieth century science, including essays by Einstein, Freeman Dyson, and Oppenheimer. This format gives us an added flexibility.

III

> In the classic view, man's life is a journey, a pilgrimage, in which one's self is not mere datum, nor an electronic calculator reading 'decisions' off new 'situations,' but a soul in the making, a self which can become itself only as the weight of sin is fully recognized and the self recognizes a center of meaning and source of power beyond itself, forgiving and remaking that self. . . . Convictions may be distinguished from opinions: men stake money on opinions, whether of lawyers or of handicappers, but they have been known to stake their lives on their convictions; opinions are argued, but convictions are the hidden agenda in every argument, the unseen weight on even the most honest set of moral scales (pp. 34-5).
>
> James Wm. McClendon, Jr.

Critical Perspectives II bears the more specific designation "Life Story as Theology," having a significant relationship to ideas found in James Wm. McClendon, Jr.'s by now classic volume, Biography as Theology: How Life Stories Can Remake Today's Theology. In this book, McClendon establishes an ethic of character based on a very specific understanding of the nature of convictions and his study of various life stories, including Dag Hammarskjold, Martin Luther King Jr., Clarence Jordan, and Charles Ives.

The reading list for this course is relatively stable in comparison to the fluctuations that characterize the great books course. For the past two years, the classes have been organized as follows:

first session	Elie Wiesel, Night Viktor Frankl, Man's Search for Meaning
second session	Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from Birmingham Jail" Malcolm X, The Autobiography of Malcolm X
third session	Dorothy Day, The Long Loneliness
fourth session	Homer A. Jack (ed.), The Gandhi Reader

The most difficult text for the students is Day's autobiography. Problems occur around the issue of student unfamiliarity with historical context and the difficulty of reading her style, which most students and faculty agree seems more suited to the journalism toward which she made such a great contribution. Day is the only Catholic and the only woman presently represented in the reading list. Some faculty are in the process of experimenting with Robert Coles' biography of Day, Radical Devotion. Surprisingly, the vocal male faculty believe we should retain Day as a female voice, while the vocal female faculty argue that Coles uses a sufficiently representative sample of her own words.

We have located a short essay on the life of Oscar Romero to be used optionally in the course, along with the feature length film Romero. In general, we try to use only minimally audio-visual material since it contributes toward "passive learning," a mode opposing the activity desirable to make a valuable discussion. Other videotapes are available to supplement this curriculum: most useful has been a Bill Moyers interview with Day and an hour presentation on the work of Mother Theresa. At least one faculty member regularly assigns the movie Gandhi to be seen before the last class, and he readily admits that he thinks students read less than usual for that night's class.

We have experimented with other texts in the past fifteen years, including Corrie Ten Boom's The Hiding Place, Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Letters and Papers from Prison, and J. Niehardt's Black Elk Speaks. The course could be taught as a Comparative Religions course, since we presently represent Catholicism, Protestantism, Judaism, Islam, and Hinduism.

The main focus of this class has been to present life stories of individuals whose convictional transformation has had profound societal consequences. Here we find McClendon's definition of convictions to be indispensable: "[w]e may roughly define convictions," he writes, "as those tenacious beliefs which when held give definiteness to the character of a person or of a community, so that if they were surrendered, the person or community would be significantly changed" (p. 34). For this reason we have resisted the temptation to read in the very wide and more popular field of spirituality books whose authors may be more literate writers, who may communicate more clearly the vicissitudes of the soul's inner workings, or whose works may more directly nurture the souls of our students. Our selection of life stories might accurately be classified in the genre of social prophets.

Two major shortcomings attend the course as it is presently constituted. First, the student handbook clearly states the only agreed upon theoretical construct of the course: "the study of biographies or autobiographies of men and women who, through personal transformation, have accomplished significant social reform for the benefit of mankind." A more nuanced and inclusive theoretical framework would help students understand the concept of life story as theology in an historical and unifying way. This would furthermore make it possible to structure formally parallel connections between the students' own autobiographies, written during their portfolio classes, and the life stories in Critical Perspectives II. We are presently proposing to add a fifth session to Critical perspectives II which we refer to as a "capstone" class, in which students will be encouraged to identify connections between their own life stories and those of the authors. In this session we would like students to be able to see their work with Saint Mary's in as broad and deep a way as possible, viewing perspicaciously their past, present and future. We will undoubtedly encourage faculty to experiment with various models to bring optimal closure to both the individual class and the months together. Toward this end, faculty have chosen to assign final essay topics somewhere on a spectrum begining with the texts and ending with students' life experience (or vice versa). Themes of values, ethics, goals, or turning points are most common.

Still, this course must continue to meet the demand to fulfill a religious studies requirement, and this distinguishes the content of this course from that of the portfolio course. Thus, the theoretical understanding of the course, particularly from the faculty's point of view, remains crucial. In addition to McClendon's work, which is especially helpful in dealing with twentieth century issues and characters, and to which I shall briefly return, John S. Dunne's A Search for God in Time and Memory may prove to be valuable to faculty and eventually to students especially in giving a historical perspective to religious autobiography. In particular, Dunne proposes a threefold development of religious autobiography from Paul through Augustine to Kierkegaard (none of whom we presently assign our students):

> In the New Testament period, when life, at least in some milieus, was still conceived as a story of deeds, the quest, for instance the quest that carried Paul from Pharisaism to Christianity, tended to involve a man in the problem of faith and works. In a later period, when life was conceived as a story of experience, the quest, for instance the quest that carried Augustine from Manicheanism to Christianity, tended to involve a man in the problem of the gamut of experience. In the modern period when life is conceived as a story of appropriation, the quest, for instance the quest that carried Kierkegaard from Hegelianism to Christianity, tends to involve a man in the problem of alienation and autonomy (34).

Dunne's schema shows three successive views of life: life as deeds, as experience, and as appropriation. Each of these three pivotal figures moves toward Christianity. In this same chapter, "The Life Story," Dunne refers expecially to "the great classics of autobiography written in modern time, Rousseau's Confessions, Wordsworth's Prelude, and

Goethe's Poetry and Truth" (47); he relies on Yeats' rather well-known idea that "modern man looks to the mirror rather than to the mask to discover what he should do and who he should try to become" (62). Dunne appropriately refers to Marcus Aurelius, Hegel, Descartes and Pascal in his analysis of the history of religious autobiography in the European tradition. It comes as no surprise that Dunne's position is explicitly and unapologetically Christian. What is helpful is Dunne's historical perspective and the concomitant depth of insight into our contemporary situation:

> But when a modern man believes in the face of doubt, as did Pascal, or in the face of despair, as did Kierkegaard, or in the face of relativity, as does the contemporary man of faith, then he experiences a victory over death, even over the death of God. This is an experience comparable perhaps to the Easter faith of the original disciples of Jesus, a faith in the face of the death of Jesus and the apparent failure of his life and his life work. What this faith would be for the modern man is an acceptance of the judgment upon all human judgment, the judgment upon doubt and despair and relativity, the judgment that is the unconditional acceptance of man. Such faith can arise consciously and explicitly only when doubt is universal, as it was for Pascal, or when despair is universal, as it was for Kierkegaard, or when relativity is universal, as it may be for a contemporary man. "This is the victory which overcomes the world," John said, "our faith" (68-9).

To be human today then, for Dunne, is to have faith in a way which unites oneself to individuals throughout history with Easter faith. McClendon's concluding chapter in Biography as Theology is in a similar way explicitly Christian. Distinguishing between a propositional and biographical theology, McClendon writes:

> For propostional theology, the center may be upon the Bible (though propositional theology acknowledges that the Bible speaks much of persons) or the message of the Bible duly transformed for the modern age. For a biographical theology (though it acknowledges that the lives it attends to each incorporate convictions) the center must be the lives themselves, or more accurately must be one life, *the life of Christ..* Propositional theology may take the uncritical form of Catholic scholasticism or Protestant fundamentalism, or it may take the highly sophisticated form of some modern theologies of the Word. A telltale clue in either case is abandonment of the attempt to confront, and be confronted by, Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ (198).

That we deal openly with questions of faith and the object of faith distinguishes Critical Perspectives as a religious studies course. These questions are built into the curriculum of the course. In this intensive class meeting only four sessions and guided by the Socratic method of shared inquiry, it has not been possible to make conscious theoretical models like Dunne or McClendon. Perhaps much of the value and strength of the course is that the life stories, as narratives, do speak powerfully on their own, without supporting contextual material. One might also argue, and evidence in my own experience would support this as well, that the essential ideas of faith, hope and love are not brought forward into new light, that students can simply reenforce their own prejudices in this reading and discussion. Such reenforcement does not happen often, but instructors need to be wary of it happening even with the brightest students.

IV

In this section, I am including sample sections from two Critical Perspectives I papers and six Critical Perspectives II papers, used with the authors' permission, maintaining their anonymity. The Critical Perspectives II papers incorporate the experience of Critical Perspectives I and show the students' perceptions at the very end of their program. These are recent papers which the faculty have submitted as exemplary for the depth and breadth of students' insights. For ease of reading, I am including them in their original double-spaced form. First, a highly original paper in which the author relates her own development as a woman to three of the women characters read in Critical Perspectives I:

A.

Roles of Women

During the past four years my roles as a woman have changed significantly. With my divorce as the catalyst, I began doing things I never thought I could do, thinking things I never thought I would think and being someone I only dreamed about. I see my transformation from a dependent, insecure woman into an independent, successful woman as truly astonishing. Yet my story is not an isolated case. Women all around me are courageously entering new roles, reaching for bigger and better opportunities toward fulfilling lives.

During these past seventeen years of adulthood, I have lived a few years with Roselily's philosophy, looking for a man to rescue me. For over five years, I was a Lady Macbeth, standing by my man, wanting only the best for his life, come what may. And more recently, I share some of Antigone's characteristics: a determined woman who pursues what I want without fear. In this final paper I will discuss the roles of Roselily, Lady Macbeth, and Antigone and how their roles have, at times, paralleled my own.

If anybody needed a break, it was Roselily. She was a poor, single mother of three small children who worked in a sewing plant. Getting ahead financially was only a dream. Roselily was stuck in a no-win situation. She explained her mood as "impatient with sewing. With doing everything for three children. Impatient to leave the girls she had known since childhood, their children growing up, their husbands hanging around her, already old, seedy. The fathers of her children driving by, waving, not waving; reminders of times she would just as soon forget." She concluded that the only honorable way out of her poverty and moroseness was to marry (into money).

It came as quite a surprise to me that Roselily did indeed find a man of some wealth who wanted to marry her, three kids and all. . . . Roselily acknowledged she didn't know if she really loved him. . . . . Even though there were enough misgivings in Roseliliy's mind to stop the ceremony and call it a mistake, she took the vows and said the "I do's. . . ."

I, too, had many doubts before my marriage. Like Roselily's husband, mine came from a very different background. He had an emotionally distant relationship with his parents; I had a close relationship with my parents. He had a history of drug and alcohol abuse; I never even had a taste of alcohol. He easily persuaded me of his love for me and our compatibility. We were married against my parents' will in June, 1978.

Marriage seemed like a good way to get out from under my parents' rigid, domineering control. Like Roselily, I married to escape my situation, even though there were strong clues that I might be equally, if not more miserable as a result of my decision.

Lady Macbeth was portrayed as a woman who loved her husband, loyally working by his side to accomplish his goals. When she read Macbeth's letter describing that he would be king, she pledged in her heart to do whatever she could to bring swiftly the prophecy to fruition. Lady Macbeth said, "He that's coming must be provided for; and you shall put this night's great business into my dispatch . . . . Leave all the rest to me."

Lady Macbeth's role was one of supportive wife. She even went above and beyond that and putting aside her conscience, she assisted in a murder, all to bring her husband the position he so desired. She stood by her man, denied any wrongdoing and number her conscience by doing what her husband needed her to do.

A few years after we were married, my hausband and I applied for United Nations jobs as English teachers at ______________ in ______________. Our housing and class schedule was arranged and all that needed to be done was for us to sign some official papers and fly to our new home. In the midst of our packing and last minute arrangements we received a phone call from someone at the United Nations saying that he was sorry but my husband was not accepted for the position. We were absolutely numb, thinking that the decision regarding our acceptance had been made long before.

After days of pressing for a reason, the U. N. person reluctantly disclosed that my husband received some bad references and they feared that he might cause an "international incident." We were completely astounded. I defended my husband to the end, staunchly believing that the United Nations had made an outrageously wrong decision. Who would possibly lead them to believe such a thing? I immediately looked upon all of his references with suspicion, wondering who would turn on him so unjustly.

My role at that time in my marriage was similar to that of Lady Macbeth. I was a devoted, loyal wife, blindly supporting my husband's goals. I say "blindly" because now I believe that he could have caused an international incident. He was an emotionally unsteady man who was not prepared for the extra pressures and challenges of life overseas. After our rejection for the United Nations job we moved to ______________. It was there that my husband had an emotional breakdown.

I was fascinated by the character of Antigone. She was a woman with a mission. She knew that in spite of the King's decree she would mourn and bury her brother, courageously ready to take the inevitable consequences. In a conversation with her sister, Antigone confidently said, "I will bury him myself. And even if I die in the act, that death will be a glory."

Antigone had a strength of character that I admire. Her role was one of an independent, determined woman. . . . I share Antigone's fierce determination -- not toward family responsibility but toward my own emotional, intellectual and spiritual growth. I will no longer be led around by another's plans for my life. I am committed to pursuing what I want and I am determined to keep my independence and momentum going in a positive direction. I have suffered through a divorce and I don't intend to waste the lessons learned through that suffering. Giving up myself for the sake of another is never going to happen again. I no longer look to a man to resue me. If I remarry, I will stand by my man, but not at the expense of my own conscience. And I hope and pray that the characteristics that I so admire in Antigone will remain with me the rest of my days.

B.

This student has worked professionally with small groups for twenty years. Here is a sample of insights from Critical Perspectives I:

My subjective results of this course do not lend themselves to a very "symmetrical" essay. Some of the effects are more precisely definable while others are in a very "unfinished" stage. It is the unfinished impacts which perhaps are the more profound. . . . By a great leap, I relate this interpretation of Antigone to all "logical" situations.

Recently I wrote a paper on group decision making in which I critiqued a series of articles which were largely written from the vantage point of persons wanting decisions. I pointed out that the people participating in group decision making may have a whole set of motives and needs unrelated to the logic driving the people setting up the process. Those setting up group decision making structures probably want decisions; but those who participate in them may be motivated by social and emotional factors. While it is a very long stretch from Antigone to modern group behavior, these ideas feel "attitudinally" related to me. In this period of my life I tend also to look for the un-logical and even un-purposeful factors in situations. At an earlier period, I would have dismissed such factors as irresponsible, unfair, and irrational -- something to be purged. . . .

[Referring to Macbeth:] For example, in my particular role on a Board of Trustees, I am responsible for providing for a system which holds people accountable. And so the question whether and how their individual degrees of awareness affects their responsibility is an important theoretical and practical concern.

[Regarding Notes from the Underground and Billy Budd:] Melville has created the tensest of art: making us profoundly regret the loss of an innocence that we could no longer respect if it were closer to us. Like underground man, as underground people, our ability to love that kind of innocence in the flesh has crumbled before our hyper-consciousness.

This is not my first exposure to the general idea of the loss of innocence. Life and literature have familiarized me with both the concept and the experience. And unlike virginity, one can and does lose "innocence" many times. . . . In the last five years I have had the very special experience of unexpectedly finding my participation in complex group deliberations playing a very key role in changing a large institution. . . . I compare this to the experience of many work related groups in which ambiguity results in no results. We could not ask the authors for more information, we had to build with what we had. The process, then, proceeded by speculation and evaluation, trying options until they sounded right in a "connected" fashion. So often in my normal work, people throw up their hands because they do not have "all the facts." So the single most important effect of this critical thinking experience for me is the idea that the same "playful" attitude toward "real life" work is worth trying.

C.

Where Is God?

> For more than a half hour he stayed there, struggling between life and death, dying in slow agony under our eyes. And we had to look him full in the face. He was still alive when I passed in front of him. His tongue was still red, his eyes were not yet glazed.
>
> Behind me, I heard the same man asking:
>
> "Where is God now?"
>
> And I heard a voice within me answer him:
>
> "Where is he? Here he is -- He is hanging here on this gallows. . . . "(62)
>
> Wiesel, Night

For Wiesel, at the ebb of despair, death all around him, an adolescent caught in the darkness of the holocaust, God was in the youth, the innocence of this dying, tortured boy. . . . Beyond my ego, the spirit lies within me. . . . For Dorothy Day, God was manifested in the community, in self-service. Malcolm X saw the Spirit of god in the causes of civil rights and in the rituals and practice of the Muslim religion. Gandhi saw God in the masses, in the sacrificial austerities of Hinduism, in non-violence, ahimsa, the satyagraha community. . . . I have gone through many changes in this dance of life, from my non-conforming search for a meaning in this life, to my current, more traditional family, career oriented lifestyle.

> If you're not a liberal at 20, you have no heart, and if you're not a conservative at 40, you have no head.
>
> Winston Churchill

My life has become more conservative. God is in my commitment to my family's well being and needs. I communicate with God daily, in my prayers, in a Christian model. My liberal experimentation regarding Eastern/comparative religions has fallen away to that of my Christian upbringing.

> Religion of your upbringing is like a cloak, you must take it off, inspect it, see how it is made, to understand it.
>
> Hari Das

God is in my career, health services. I can look at my career as a ministry. If I forget about my personal frustrations with the work effort, I can see it as an opportunity to serve our senior citizens. I can help give dignity and respect in their golden years. In offering support and understanding to the families I serve, and guidance and encouragement to the employees I oversee, I can look at all this as a way of serving God.

In my younger days I was self-centered in my quest for spiritual understanding. I wanted to go off to the wilderness and look inside to find God. This path helped me to find solitude, self-sufficiency, and a calm center within. Its emptiness was in the fact I was doing this alone. Health services has helped bring the community concept into my life. God is not just in the beauty of nature or centered in my inner-self, but also in his children, the community.

I no longer am as concerned with my struggle to get myself to the top of the mountain to see the sunset. I now want to help my children and God's children, the community, to get to the top of the mountain also.

My life does not seem as pure and holy as I once aspired it to be. I am less critical of the world around me than I am of myself. I tried so hard to separate good from evil, that my tendency , and that of Christianity, was to make critical judgments of others regarding their thoughts, feelings and actions. I have learned to "judge not, lest you be judged," "the pot should not call the kettle black." We are all sinners and as such, mercy, understanding and forgiveness should prevail over prejudice and scorn.

I am not perfect, the world isn't, but the better I am able to understand love, faith and forgiveness of one's failures, as well as mine, I gain more understanding in the ways of God. As the community and myself get closer to God, we get closer to the top of the mountain.

So where is God? Within, without, he's in the suffering and hope. Where isn't God?

D.

The Value of Suffering

It was two weeks before my fortieth birthday. My husband announced he wanted a divorce and asked me to move from the family residence. Two months earlier, in order to better meet family needs, I had retired from my place of employment where I had worked for sixteen years. Because I had lived in my home town for thirty-five years, I found it impossible to remain there. I could not confront people on the street asking me how I was. I was unable to respond without breaking down.

I was having my mid-life crisis. I had to move from a million dollar home to a small, one-bedroom apartment. I was bed-ridden for two months taking anti-depressants. I was too depressed and psychologically incapable of working. I could no longer emotionally or financially provide for my son. I had no money (my husband had control of all of our community assets). I no longer lived in my familiar community with my family and life-long friends; and I was without a husband that I dearly loved.

How does one handle situations like this? I felt that deep, aching sense of unfairness. It didn't make sense. If God existed, if He was minimally fair, let alone loving and forgiving, how could He do this to me?

Like most people, I had grown up with an image of God as an all-wise, all powerful parent figure who would treat us as our earthly parents did, or even better. If we were obedient and deserving, He would reward us. If we got out of line, He would discipline us, reluctantly but firmly. He would protect us from being hurt or from hurting ourselves, and would see to it that we got what we deserved in life.

Like most people, I was aware of the human tragedies that darkened the landscape -- the young people who died in car crashes, the cheerful, loving people wasted by crippling diseasess, the neighbors and relatives whose retarded or mentally ill children are spoken of in hushed tones. But that awareness never drove me to wonder about God's justice, or to question His fairness. I assumed that He knew more about the world than I did.

As Dorothy Day suggests, "We did not search for God when we were children. We took him for granted" (Day, 17). Before my mid-life crisis, I had not thought about my spirituality for a long time. I was on a productive treadmill -- working and making money. Had I taken Him for granted too long? Dante states in his opening line of The Inferno, "Midway in our life's journey, I went astray from the straight road . . . ." Had I wandered from the True Way?

An awareness of faith and spirit was created out of this experience. This was a time for inner reflection. I wanted to find answers to why people had been hurt by life -- by death, by illness, or injury, by rejection or disappointment -- and who knows in his heart that if there is justice in the world, he deserved better? Why should ordinary people have to bear extraordinary burdens of grief and pain? What can God mean to such a person? Was I turning to God as Dorothy Day suggests out of unhappiness, in grief, in despair -- "to get consolation, to get something from Him" (Day, 132)?

. . . Some say, including Rose Kennedy, that if we suffer, it is because God never sends us more of a burden than we can bear. God only lets this happen to us because He knows that we are strong enough to handle it. I have seen some people made noble and sensitive through suffering, but I have seen others grow cynical and bitter. I have seen people become jealous of those around them, unable to take part in the routine of normal living. I have seen cancers and automobile accidents take the life of one member of a family, and functionally end the lives of five others, who could never again be the normal, cheerful people they were before disaster struck. If God is testing us, He must know by now that many of us fail the test. If He is only giving us burdens we can bear, I have seen Him miscalculate far too often.

All the above responses to tragedy have at least one thing in common. They assume that God is the cause of our suffering, and they try to understand why God would want us to suffer. Is it for our own good, or is it punishment we deserve, or could it be that god does not care what happens to us?

There may be another approach. Maybe God does not cause our suffering. Maybe it happens for some reason other than the will of God. Bad things do happen to good people in this world, but it is not God who wills it.

Laws of nature treat everyone alike. They do not make exception for good people or for evil people. Insurance companies refer to earthquakes, hurricanes, and other natural disasters as "acts of God." These are actually acts of nature. For me, the earthquake is not an "act of God." The act of God is the courage of people to rebuild their lives after the earthquake, and the rush of others to help them in whatever way they can as in the San Francisco earthquake we experienced in October, 1989.

Why do people have to suffer at all? If God was designing a world for our maximum benefit, why could He not create unchanging laws of nature which would not do harm to any of us, good or bad?

Only human beings can find meaning in their pain. Pain is the price we pay for being alive. What can we do with our pain so that it becomes meaningful and not just pointless empty suffering? Pain makes some people bitter and envious. It makes others sensitive and compassionate. It is the result, not the cause, of pain that makes some experiences of pain meaningful and others empty and destructive.

One of the most important things that any religion can teach us is what it means to be human. It means being free to make choices instead of doing whatever our instincts would tell us to do. It means knowing that some choices are good, and others are evil, and it is our job to know the difference. This cannot be said of any other living creature except man, for no other creature is free to choose. . . .

Does that mean that suffering has no meaning? We could bear nearly any pain or disappointment if we thought there was a reason behind it, a purpose to it. But even a lesser burden becomes too much for us if we feel it makes no sense. When bad things happen to us in our lives that do not have a meaning or any good reason for us to accpet them willingly, we can give them a meaning. The question we should be asking is not, "Why did this happen to me?" or "What did I do to deserve this?" That is really an unanswerable, pointless question. A much better question would be, "Now that this has happened to me, what am I going to do about it?" We need to get over the questions that focus on the past and on the pain. Dorothy Soelle, in her book Suffering (chapter five), suggests that the most important question we can ask about suffering is whom it serves. Does our suffering serve God or the devil, the cause of becoming alive or being morally paralyzed? Not "where does the tragedy come from?" but "where does it lead?" is the issue on which Soelle would have us focus.

Suffering allows us to explore the limits of our capacity of strength and love and cheerfulness.

Dorothy Day states, "The problem is, how to love God?" (138). Without man's love, God does not exist as God. Love is the one thing no one, not even God, can command. It is a free gift, or it is nothing. And it is most itself, most free, when it is offered in spite of suffering, of injustice, and of death. We do not love God because we are afraid of Him, or because He will hurt us if we turn our backs on Him. We love Him because He is God, because He is the author of all the beauty and order around us, the source of our strength and the hope and courage within us, and of other people's strength and hope and courage with which we are helped in our time of need. We love Him because He is the best part of ourselves and our world. So why do we suffer? Perhaps to feel the depth and measure of our response.

E.

Having compared Day, Malcolm, and Gandhi's views of justice, this student applied her findings in an analysis of her work in the corporate world:

> . . . In the 1950's when I was growing up watching David and Rickie, there were plenty of (white) people who were living the dream. The life and the dream were richer then. The family was at its heart. The dream grew out of our history, out of the lean years and the war years. It symbolized Mom and Dad at home together with the children, a chicken in every pot, all the comforts of home, church on Sundays, free education, and the opportunity to be all you could be.
>
> Today, to have that same house, kids and the cars, both partners have to work. In a corporate environment, where the individual can become a success, five days a week are no longer enough. The fourteen hour days that Dorothy Day and her compatriots fought so long and so hard against are an exception. Of course the children aren't working any longer, but they have no one to come home to either. Our values have gone from the family to the nebulous aspiration, to the undefined height, to the BMW. We worship material wealth, ambition and workaholism. We'll get the job done if it kills us. But if it does, what was the point?
>
> The corporation is our leader and the corporation has no heart. Its appetite is insatiable, it can never have enough of an employee's time or loyalty. But it can only take, it cannot give. . . . The corporation has no loyalty. . . .The people of this country need to stop for a few moments and to rethink the American Dream. . . . And what of the homeless, were they in that dream? . . . They are of no dream, they are a reality, an ever increasing number of destitute. They are the result of this society that worships ambition and the bottom line and has no time for charity. . . .We are all guilty. . . . We are doing it to ourselves. We are each of us trying to get to the top of an ever smaller pyramid, or to stay on top of it. . . .

How do we respond to this injustice? Each of us individually needs only to say "no more", that we want our lives to count for something more. We need to decide for ourselves what is truly important to us and to live that life, to choose between possessions and people. We may even need to sacrifice some of those material goods, or to share our personal wealth with the less fortunate.

F.

This student records part of the conversion of her son to and away from drugs with his use of Viktor Frankl's words:

Twelve weeks ago I was told by my seventeen year old son that he "fell in love with" cocaine. He said that one snort showed him what "normal" people felt like. He said that for the first time he felt "whole." Since the night of that conversation my son and I have both undergone some drastic changes. Last night we had a conversation about faith and trust and responsibility. Last night he said that he feels he is "totally responsible for his attitudes and actions." He said that knowing this makes him feel a real "power and a wholeness."

G.

This student reflects on a new view of her own life story, after the readings in Critical Perspectives II:

In reference to my autobiography, I see my personal sufferings as conceiving a child out of wedlock, my divorce in nineteen hundred and seventy-seven, the experiences of raising two children alone for tenyears, lack of monetary funds, and loneliness. . . . Truly the meaning in my life has been through suffering. Suffering certainly not be compared to Frankl or Day, but suffering in each common individual's life. My suffering has lead me to the meaning of life, to self determination, that being a choice of attitude. I, through these experiences, have received this blessing and I have learned that I am in control of my destiny. I am not a victim, but I can choose to follow my God, to have an inner spirit. No person can take this from me. Frankl describes this view as he writes of the Jews in concentration camps,

> Under the influence of a world which no longer recognized the value of human life and human dignity . . . . Under this influence the personal ego finally suffered a loss of values. If the man in the concentration camp did not stuggle against this in a lost effort to save his self respect, he lost the feeling of being an individual, a being with mind, with inner freedom and personal value. . . The last of human freedoms -- the ability to choose one's attitude in a given set of circumstances.

H.

It is common to receive papers dealing with various aspects of addiction, divorce and dying. This nurse relates her life tragedies to faith with the kind of inspiration which only comes from life experience:

My career as a nurse has forced me to constantly deal with death and the circumstances and people involved. It has made me question my own values in life and I often find myself testing my own responses if I were placed in a similar situation. The reality of these times was experienced when I found myself diagnosed with a brain tumor. It came at a very down time in my life while facing a divorce and otherwise already uncertian future. But with an illogical belief in the occurence of the improbable and a large personal support system I made it through. I found the same to be true when my daughter was diagnosed and eventually died of leukemia. I have found this relationship of subject and object unique in every cae. Hundreds may believe, but each has to believe by himself.

The measure of our faith is our willingness to reach out to one another, even at the price of letting our own weakness be revealed in the process. It is the fundamental trust involved in this self-revelation which builds our own and our neighbor's strength. Pride shuts us off from relying on each other, leaving present tensions to become more unbearable because we sentence each other to suffer alone. When St. Paul wanted to strengthen the faith of his fledgling communities, he reminded them of their obligation to help each other in a very personal way.

Faith is to believe what you do not yet see and the reward is to see what you believe. Hebrews 11:1 states "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." When faith is under strain it is not revived by a new pronouncement by some official or by resolutions passed by some organization. Its renewal depends on how willing we are to be a sharing and trusting community, a body of believers ready to believe in each other. The depth of the faith of the people is clearly related to how much they are actually people together, persons on the same pilgrimage in whose caravans there is room for all. My life's experiences have left me with a willingness to seek out and share life with others so that my caravan will always be full.

V

If students miss a single class in Critical Perspectives I or II, they are required to make up the class with the reading of a text and the writing of a paper. In addition to the rather well known works frequently cited as Great Books which are suggested as make-up texts for Critical Perspectives I, we offer the students the following list of life stories as make-up texts for Critical Perspectives II. Since adults students generally have very good reasons for missing class, these assignments are not seen as punitive, but rather an opportunity to read selections which might not fit the strictest guidelines for the course. This partial list shows the interesting variety of the genre of life story; as such, it may point to future directions for this course.

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VI

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IN SEARCH OF A CONTEXT FOR OUR WORK: UNDERSTANDING THE LIFE HISTORY METHOD AND ITS PLACE IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH TRADITION

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Examining and interpreting personal documents, and evaluating narrative descriptions of learning from experience, are tasks with which practitioners in the area of prior learning assessment are intimately familiar. Defending this learning from experience as legitimate knowledge, and the use of such "documents of life" (Plummer, 1983) for the purpose of awarding academic credit to individual students, is a responsibility that is frequently exercised by experienced practitioners within the wider university community. What are often less well understood and articulated by all participants in such debates about the nature of knowledge and how it is created are the intellectual precedents for these disputes. These differences of opinion within our own academic communities can also be seen as a microcosm of a much larger debate about the role of personal experience in the creation of knowledge. Disputed knowledge claims and competing epistemologies with significant histories of their own are often at work in these conversations on our own campuses.

The search for the intellectual precedents for our work with adult students can lead in many directions. One of the most productive of these intellectual streams is the humanist research tradition within the social sciences. Within this tradition, an examination of the life history method, in particular, can shed much light on our struggles to establish the credibility of learning from experience on our campuses.

For the purposes of increasing our own understanding of the intellectual context of our work, it is important to recognize that the use of such personal documents as are regularly employed in the practice of prior learning assessment has a long history in the social sciences. Our own concerns about rigor, and about how to assess the strength and depth of our students' learning through the materials they assemble, lie well within the framework of this tradition. My selection of the life history method for investigation was guided by an interest in research methods which recognized the importance of understanding human growth and development in a cultural context. Within this approach the value of the individual's own story is emphasized. The life history method's reliance on a wide variety of materials bearing on an individual life make it particularly relevant to the task of inquiry about this process of prior learning assessment with which many practitioners in alternative degree programs are familiar.

This paper will focus on an examination of the life history method as an approach to inquiry in the social sciences, and the relevance of this approach to the assessment of experiential learning. This approach to inquiry will be defined in the section to follow. Subsequent sections will focus on the history of this approach, and a critique of the literature. The conclusion will draw parallels between the nature of life history research and the practice of assessing learning from experience in colleges and universities.

Defining the Territory

In Designing Qualitative Research (1989), Catherine Marshall and Gretchen Rossman provide a brief but useful introduction to what they refer to as the "life history approach," which they describe as being utilized across the social science disciplines. The emphasis is on the individual's experience of society rather than on how society copes with individuals. Norman Denzin (1989), a contemporary sociologist heavily influenced by the perspective of symbolic interactionism, elaborates on this central assumption of the life history approach: "human conduct is to be studied and understood from the perspective of the persons involved" and that "this is a case for . . . actively sharing in the subject's experiences and perspectives" (1989, p. 183). Several other researchers commented on the interactive nature of the research process itself, among them Sandra Dolby-Stahl (1985) and Gelya Frank (1979) who both also recognized that the research process itself and the form of reporting would inevitably be impacted by the shared experience of conducting the research. This emphasis on the shared and interactive nature of the process of working with personal documents is one that would not be unfamiliar to those who have practiced in the area of prior learning assessment. It is a common feature of the process of portfolio development. Denzin describes sixteen types of terms and methods regularly utilized in the literature, some of their key distinguishing features, and the forms and variations of each type (1989, p. 188). A chart he utilized is reproduced in the Appendix for purposes of clarification. Although the research and reporting may take different forms, life history research is conducted in such social science disciplines as anthropology, history, psychology, and sociology. The use of life history material in literary research is more widespread. The literary forms of autobiography and biography have a long history of their own.

Marshall and Rossman describe some of the advantages of the life history approach in the social sciences as follows:

> [S]ince it pictures the total course of a persons's life, the reader enters vicariously into the same experiences. Second, the technique provides a fertile source of hypotheses that may be tested by further study. Third, it indicates behavior processes and personality types that may be analyzed when a sufficient number of detailed life histories are accumulated for comparative study (1989, p. 97).

In an article on "The Relevance of Life Histories," Howard Becker (1970) describes other advantages, noting that the "life history can be particularly useful in giving us insight into the subjective side of much-studied institutional processes, about which unverified assumptions are . . . often made" (p. 424). Becker also feels that "[t]he life history, more than any other technique except perhaps participant observation, can give meaning to the overworked notion of *process*" itself (pp. 424-425), which more traditional research fails to get at. The narrative form both of the many documents utilized in life history research, and of most life history reports, allows the researcher to illustrate not just events but individual perspectives on the nature and meaning of the experiences in question.

Some of the disadvantages of the life history method are the typical ones usually attributed to qualitative research methods, such as "its perceived lack of generality" as well as "the lack of accepted principles of selection and of suitable analytical concepts to establish a coherent frame of reference" (Marshall and Rossmann, p. 97). The issues of truth and bias also pose additional challenges to the researcher in this area.

Although an in-depth analysis of methods of interpretation and forms of reporting would broaden the scope of this paper considerably, these issues remain to be addressed in a comprehensive way by life history researchers. Daniel Bertaux, the editor of an enormously helpful volume of examples of such research, noted, for instance, that the "question, 'What can be done with life stories?' may also be construed to mean, 'What *could* be done with them?'" since so much remains to be accomplished in the area of philosophy and method (Bertaux, 1981, p. 5).

In addition to the usual chronological method of analysis, Marshall and Rossmann quote D. G. Mandelbaum (1973) who "suggested three alternatives to chronological order as a way to organize and present the data: (1) the dimensions or aspects of the person's life, (2) the principal turnings and the life conditions between turnings, and (3) the person's characteristic means of adaptation" (in Marshall and Rossman, p. 98). Mandelbaum's suggestions are particularly relevant to the task of assessing the types of autobiographies written for portfolios since students tend to examine marker events or critical incidents in their lives. The focus is not infrequently on how overcoming these dilemmas led to the decision to return to school.

An Historical Perspective

Both Daniel Bertaux (1981) and Ken Plummer (1983) elaborate on the rise, fall, and subsequent resurgence of interest in life history research in enormously helpful volumes on the practical and historical dimensions of this approach. Bertaux describes both *autobiography* and *biography* as "long-established literary forms," and refers to the work of "nineteenth century . . . anthropologists doing fieldwork [who] started to collect *life stories*, i.e. accounts of a person's life as delivered orally by the person him[/her]self" (p. 7). As these stories were gradually elaborated on by the use of other interviews and materials, the term *life history* came into more common usage (Langness, 1965, pp. 4-5 in Bertaux, 1981, p. 7). It is worth noting here that Bertaux prefers the term, *life story*, to the more widely used *life history* for its emphasis on the point of view of the research subject rather than that of the researcher or social organization.

Catherine Warren, a Canadian adult educator who has worked with the life history method, also describes the origins of the use of personal documents in sociological research. She links it to the community studies tradition in sociology practiced in Chicago "from 1914 - 1933 under the leadership at the University of Chicago of a former newspaperman and sociologist, Robert Park" (1982, p. 215). The focus of research was the community, and a wide variety of sources of information were utilized. She also recognized the importance of the presence of such leading intellectuals of their time as "George Herbert Mead, John Dewey, and William James" who served to imbue "the climate of the time . . . with with a strong pragmatic component" (p. 215).

Warren discusses the early work of William I. Thomas and Florian Znaniecki (1918-1920), who spent several years researching and writing _The Polish Peasant in Europe and America_, a study of Polish immigrants to the United States. Volume Three of this study is described as "one of the earliest instances in which sociologists used an autobiography or life history for sociological analysis" (p. 216). She also mentioned the work of Clifford Shaw, who researched and wrote three volumes about delinquent boys, _The Jackroller_ (re-issued in 1966), _The Natural History of a Delinquent Career_ (1931), and _Brothers in Crime_ (1938). The first mentioned, _The Jackroller_, is frequently cited in examinations of the life history method. The primary difficulty she described with much of this literature is that relatively little material is left to describe their data collection techniques or other methodological issues which arose during the course of this research.

Plummer (1983) further elaborates on this research tradition in Chicago, its eventual decline, and the perspectives which informed it in ways that are particularly relevant to the theme of this paper. He describes the strands of thought contributing to the "curiously American sociological theory now known as symbolic interactionism [including among them] . . . . pragmatism, formalism, humanism, mild anarchism and romanticism" (p. 52). Symbolic interactionism, as defined by Denzin (1989) suggests that "[e]very human being defines the world differently" (p. 183). Thus, much of the life history literature emphasizes this individual and somewhat relativistic perspective on the world which is a predominant feature both of symbolic interactionism, specifically, and the larger American society in which it flourished for a time. Plummer argues that the life history method

> came most into its own at a time when there were intellectual arguments developing that could lend weight to its strategies. For the documentary approach to become academically acceptable, it required institutional and intellectual legitimation; and this is what Chicago accomplished . . . . [F]rom the mid 1930s onwards, the arguments subsequently tottered as the more 'scientific,' less subjective approaches . . . came to ascendancy. The approach remained but the legitimations got lost; and hence it was slowly relegated to the subterranean margins of proper research (p. 60).

A discussion of some of the circumstances leading to the lessening of interest in life history research, particularly in the discipline of sociology, will follow.

A number of events in the late 1930s probably hastened the demise of life history research. A helpful article by Evan Thomas (1978) illustrates the nature of the debate about life histories. A more complete understanding of the results of a 1938 symposium sponsored by the Social Science Research Council, in particular, will illustrate more clearly the issues at stake, and the intentions of sociologists concerning their emerging discipline.

The use of personal documents had generated enough interest that Herbert Blumer was "commissioned to prepare [an] appraisal of _The Polish Peasant_" by the Social Science Research Council in 1938 (Thomas, 1978, p. 128). The symposium was held the same year "by the . . . Council . . . in which the life history, as a sociological method was discussed" (Warren, p. 216), and in which Blumer's critique was featured. Thomas suggests that, at the time of the symposium, the use of personal documents was already in somewhat of a decline, and had been "superseded . . . by participant observation . . . [and] by the community-surveying techniques refined by Paul Lazarsfeld and Samuel Stouffer, which promised objectivity and precision in the formation and verification of generalizations" (Thomas, 1978, p. 128). Thomas describes the symposium itself as a "postmorten examination of the personal document approach and its apparent weaknesses" (p. 128). Apparently, the transcripts of this symposium reveal a considerable amount of skepticism towards life history research on the part of sociologists who hoped to "imitate the experimental procedures of physical science" (p. 128). While Blumer, himself, is said to have held that "The Polish Peasant provided an understanding of its subject that was of considerable value even though no laws of behavior were demonstrated in it," he was criticized by Samuel Stouffer who "accused Blumer of taking a 'nihilistic attitude' toward the possibility of scientific laws in sociology" (p. 128). It is of special significance that "the life history method emerged at that time as a remarkably difficult method to use and to evaluate" (Warren, p. 216). Warren also remarks that the need to apply increasingly scientifically rigorous standards to such research, including an emphasis on verification rather than on generation of theory was an outcome of this meeting. In following years, the Council sponsored several critical surveys of research utilizing personal documents in social scientific disciplines. It was the conclusion of Robert Angell, for instance, that such research offered "plausible explanations of social phenomena but no means of conclusively testing the interpretations" (Gottschalk, Kluckhohn, and Angell, pp. 200, 215, 220-221 in Thomas, p. 128).

In examining the decades which followed, Bertaux also refers to the preeminence of the Chicago sociologists in the twenties and thirties, but notes that

> [d]uring the forties, American sociologists, then the world leaders in empirical research, almost abandoned this technique altogether. Its collapse was as sudden and radical as had been its success and prestige during the twenties. Anyone interested in using life stories for social

> research must come to grips with this historical collapse and look for its underlying causes, which are social as well as methodological; for it seems to cast a shadow on the future viability of the technique (p. 1).

During the fifties and sixties, relatively little mention of life history research was made in textbooks on methodology which "focused upon survey research and simply ignored other forms of observation, including the collection of life stories" (Bertaux, 1981, p. 1). That the tradition of qualititative research remained alive at all during this time was attributed primarily to the symbolic interactionists by Bertaux (p. 1). Apparently, life history research fell into a gradual decline in other countries as well since researchers only gradually began to discover each other, and the existence of independent research projects in the mid-1970's. It is probably not accidental, given the early work of Florian Znaniecki, that the only country in which life history research has been continuously conducted is Poland, which has a rich tradition of *pamietniki* or "written, topical memoirs" (p. 6).

Following the death of the community studies research tradition in Chicago, and subsequent advances in the use of quantitative methods, relatively little was done in this area, despite its auspicious beginnings, until rather recently. Warren suggests that as many of the social sciences have been impacted by a more phenomenological approach, research which emphasizes a more descriptive stance has increased.

> Phenomonological, ethnomethodological, and symbolic interactionist approaches tend toward

> interpretative analyses of situations based upon the experiences and the perceptions of those experiences by the interactant. With this interpretive stance, one's everyday life is viewed as a social reality interpreted by men and women and subjectively meaningful to them (p. 217).

Denzin regards these notions as central to participant observation "which is one life history expanded many times, and . . . traceable [historically and intellectually] to symbolic interactionism" (1989, p. 183). I have found, in both phenomenological and ethnomethodological approaches, the possibility for research which recognizes individual and group actions as central to the research process.

A Critique of the Literature

In examining the life history literature, one of the most apparent difficulties is that few researchers addressed the issue of why such material, or its interpretation, should be considered meaningful in a scientific sense, or even how that this might be accomplished. While it is generally recognized that reports of life history research might be a valuable source of possible hypotheses for testing through more quantitatively-oriented research, the contributions that might be made to increased understandings of the meaning of human experiences have yet to be more fully realized. Kenneth Little, who also examined the life history literature from an anthropological perspective, came to the following conclusions:

> [F]irst, . . . the life history is often used for concerns other than the study of an individual as an individual. . . . Second, . . . the agreed methodological principle when anthropologists use life histories, although their theories may differ

> in emphasis and detail, is that one must apply some analytical technique to the life history material as a way of doing something with the document, otherwise it remains purely descriptive and, in an analytical sense, wasted. . . . Life histories are used not merely to describe a life but rather, to *explain* it through analysis and interpretation (Little, 1980, p. 216).

He went on to suggest that by applying concepts and constructs to an individual life, the investigator may be making inferences which are alien to the life as it is lived by the individual.

Frank, in particular, discussed some of the significant limitations, from a phenomenological perspective, of the life history approach, in which "[i]n practice, the life history has been treated as a direct representation of the informant's life, . . . and insufficient attention has been directed toward the precise ways in which the life history is limited as a resource for making inferences about the subject's actual experience" (1979, p. 72). Very few would argue that inferences could not be made, and the practice of disciplined inquiry would seem to demand them, but the how of making inferences is handled less clearly. Frank suggests that

> [w]e assume that there is such a thing as a truthful response and compose ethnographies to a great extent from information elicited from subjects and taken as true accounts of real things. . . . We . . . tend to collect information about other persons as if there is world that is always there, available to every investigator in the same way, and susceptible to being positively described. This "as if" may be a fiction (1979, p. 88).

The issues raised by Frank are significant ones, and must be addressed by researchers in this area.

The writing of early anthropologists about distant and exotic "natives," and even the writing of sociologists about social "deviants" adopt the posture of norms and exceptions which is less easy to sustain, for instance, when examining the personal experiences of adult students whose difficulties with higher education may call into question prevailing institutional practices, for instance, or when working with adults who may take exception to rendering their own experiences in the form of a study on "deviant" behavior or "abnormal" psychology.

Conclusions

While reviewing the literature in this area, I was frequently struck by the parallels between the experiences of life history researchers and the experiences of those of us who have worked with prior learning or portfolio assessment over a long period of time. The resurgence of interest in the life history approach occurred at about the same time, the mid-1970s, that prior learning assessment was beginning to gain a foothold in colleges and universities. We have also frequently shared with our students the verdict of a traditionally-trained academic that a particular narrative is "too descriptive" or "lacking in sufficient theory" to be regarded as learning. Although almost no one would disagree with the observation that individuals learn from their experience, the questions of what exactly what qualifies as "theory" and, particularly, how it is generated through experience have yet to be answered conclusively in almost any descipline. It has been my experience, for instance, that if a particular evaluator expects student narratives to conform very closely to conventional forms of reporting in that discipline, then our students can expect, almost as a matter of course, that the evaluator will not be supportive of student-generated "theory" resulting from their experiences. Additionally, despite the many advances in theory and research on learning styles, for instance, conventional forms of knowledge creation and dissemination are still regarded as most credible. It should not come as a surprise that individuals who have not spent the majority of their adult lives in university settings may think and learn, and make meaning of their experiences in ways that differ significantly from forms of traditional scholarship, but it often does.

The challenges these issues pose to us as practitioners, as well, are not insignificant. We are frequently struck by the richness and depth of the materials and experiences which are students present to us, yet we struggle ourselves to help them render that experience in ways that will do it justice in the setting they are in the process of entering. Gelya Frank's observation is especially relevant here. "While a life is formed around the meanings an individual develops to connect experiences, the story of a life is not a *fait accompli* of consciousness but is a form that emerges in discourse with another or oneself" (Frank, 1979, p. 86). Portfolios, as well, are a form of negotiated dialogue with our students and our colleagues about the nature of knowledge in the disciplines, and how it is constructed.

As practitioners in this area, we often function at the boundary between the university and the community, without being completely at home in either world. We must examine this unease, itself, since it is the source of many valuable insights. This discomfort is not without foundation. The discourse we engage in must not only be with the students with whom we work, but with our colleagues as well, about what knowledge is and how it is created.

An even more compelling challenge awaits us, and it is central to our role not just as practitioners but as academicians and scholars. We are presented with a wealth of material and direct representations from our students about the nature of learning from personal experience. It is a resource of such richness and diversity that our colleagues engaged in more traditional forms of scholarship could only envy us if they truly understood the significance of what we confront each day. We often enjoy the relative luxury of engaging with our students individually rather than collectively, unlike more traditional educators. Yet we, ourselves, have been guilty of excessive description in attempting to render these experiences and their significance. Traditional forms of research, particularly in the social sciences, have taught us a great deal about the nature of groups, and how they function in almost any context we could imagine. The challenge that awaits us is to utilize the resources at our disposal to understand more completely the nature of knowledge and how it is created in the context of individual lives. Since this knowledge crosses disciplines, there is more than enough work for all of us. It is a worthy enough task that it could engage us for the remainder of our professional lives.

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APPENDIX

Forms and Varieties of the Biographical Method

	Term/Method	Key Features	Forms/Variations
1.	History	What happened? How?	Oral, life, personal
2.	Fiction	An account, something made up, fashioned	Story (life, self)
3.	Biography	History of a life	Autobiography
4.	Story	A fiction, a narrative	Life, personal experience
5.	Discourse	Telling of a story	First, third person
6.	Narrative	A story, having a plot and existence independent of the teller	Fiction, epic, folklore
7.	Narrator	Teller of a story	First, third person
8.	Life History	Account of a life based on interviews and conversations	Personal history, edited, complete, topical
9.	Case	An instance of a phenomenon	Event, process
10.	Case History	History of an event or social process, not of a person	Single, multiple, medical, legal
11.	Case Study	Analysis and record of a single case	Single, multiple
12.	Life Story	A person's story of his or her life, or a part thereof	Edited, complete, topical, fictional
13.	Self Story	Story of self in relation to an event	Personal experience story, fictional, true
14.	Personal Experience Story	Stories about personal experience	Single, multiple episode, private or communal folklore
15.	Oral History	Recollections of events, their causes and effects	Work, musical, family
16.	Personal History	Reconstruction of life based on interviews and conversations	Life history, life story

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Taken from Norman F. Denzin, "The Biographical Method," in The Research Act: A Theoretical Introduction to Sociological Methods. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1989. P. 188, Figure 8-1.

RESEARCHING PRACTICE AND PRACTICING RESEARCH

A CRITIQUE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION RESEARCH AND WRITING

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At this juncture in the development and documentation of distance education as an emerging worldwide phenomenon, new contributions to the corpus of research oriented literature are critical. While intended to provide validated data for additions to the literature in the field, research has important other benefits - it can be useful in setting agendae and focusing issues for practitioners; in generating action strategies through informed discussions; and in providing bases for greater common understanding among individuals and organizations engaged in distance education activities.

Finally, after a long legacy of distance education practice, we are just now beginning to formulate a coherent definition which distinguishes it as a distinct field of educational practice and to recognize that it is a necessary component of state and national educational delivery systems; that it is a normal means of providing access to education for working adults; and that it is a legitimate field of academic inquiry.

Despite noticeable gaps, the literature on distance education grows at an encouraging pace. The new Jossey-Bass book, Distance Education - The Foundations of Effective Practice (Verduin & Clark 1991, 241-267), lists 26 pages of reference works, most on some aspect of distance education. Still, our imagination in researching and evaluating distance education has not kept pace with our innovation in applying distance education principles. Hopefully, we are not too far away from having identified and articulated acceptable principles of good practice in distance education that are derived from reliable research in the profession.

But at present, research data remains embarrassingly thin in some areas where there is an especially strong need for convincing evidence to document and demonstrate practice outcomes. For example, in identifying the most essential skill sets for effective distance instruction, we continue to rely largely on anecdotal data based primarily on personal experience, expert opinion and conventional wisdom rather than on any systematic evaluative data. In documenting the effectiveness of various distance education technologies, little empirical evidence is presented to support claims. And comparative studies on the effectiveness of distance education vs. classroom-based instruction seldom cite criteria used to measure results. A particularly thorough review of distance education literature on the topic of learner achievement at the K-12 level yielded 503 documents, yet only fourteen (14) of these were research-based studies, and even these provided little empirical evidence to support their conclusions (Moore & Thompson, 1990, 7).

A review of distance education research conducted by Cookson in 1989 confirmed that descriptive and prescriptive articles far outnumber reports of systematic inquiry. Those reports that can be categorized as empirical research studies largely address two topics: the effects of specific distance education methods and student outcomes as a measure of program effectiveness. The most often studied distance education outcome is attrition in an attempt to identify factors related to student performance. These studies are pragmatic in orientation and seldom utilize previously developed concepts of adult learning theory. Yet to be examined in any detail is the nature of the adult learning process in the distance education context (Cookson, 1989, 22-34).

A computerized national search of all books catalogued under "distance education" published since 1989 yielded fourteen (14) titles that could be categorized as substantive, research-based works. Of these, three were published in 1989, three in 1990, and eight published to date in 1991. Eight of the fourteen publications presented research data on a single program. The remaining six volumes appear to have examined instructional and distance learner issues from a more "generic" perspective. From this admittedly informal surveys we can arrive at two tentative and arguable conclusions: 1) that research-based, book length works on distance education topics appear to be growing in number (judging from the almost 300% increase in titles in 1991 over each of the two previous years); and 2) that a good deal of the research being added to the literature on distance education continues to be confined to findings based on individual programs rather than more comprehensive research studies.

Despite the introduction of several research oriented journals on distance education which have resulted in much useful and well-regarded writing in the field, a good deal of content still focuses on case studies of individual programs that rely on anecdotal information and observation rather than empirical data. For example, a randomly selected recent issue of The American Journal of Distance Education, a refereed publication devoted to research and practice, contained five articles of which only two were research based; the others focused attention on practices utilized in a particular program.

Most so-called research in distance education is still evaluative or comparative and is not useful or interesting to others than those connected with the program under review. We are studying distance education to influence decisions regarding practice, policy, strategy, yet most data has limited external validity, does not formulate hypotheses and does not offer results that can be reliably generalized to other situations. The practitioners complain that distance education research language is too abstract without practice value, but scholars argue that practical concerns do not readily lead to important research questions.

Coldeway offers a useful and important distinction between evaluative case studies of individual programs and theoretically-based research that is generalizable to other programs and practices. He notes that we are seeing and reading a lot about distance education, but we still don't know much about its quality because we focus on media, on completion rates, on what technology works best, on how it compares with traditional modes of instruction. But we still don't really know much about learners in distance education contexts, or how they learn and how best to teach them. (Coldeway, 1990, 387 ff.).

Research attention to the international context of distance education is particularly lacking. For example, the International Centre for Distance Education undertook a survey of all institutions involved in distance learning, and published its report (The State of Distance Learning Worldwide) in 1984; to date, there has been no further research effort by the Centre or by any other individual or organization to up-date this index. That so few individuals involved in distance education in the U.S. are aware of the long legacy of distance education in several foreign countries suggests that there has been an inadequate dissemination of literature reporting on research and practice outside the United States.

To be sure, the studies conducted by the British Open University documenting its practices throughout the 70s and 80s have contributed significantly to the body of distance education literature, and indeed served as a catalyst to draw increased attention to a mode of study which, while it had a long legacy in many other countries for decades, remained relatively obscure until the British Open University began documenting its work and raising important questions about its impact on individual learners as well as the society at large.

The paucity of research-supported writing on key distance education topics contributes to lingering skepticism, prevalent myths, and continuing doubts about the credibility of out-of-classroom instruction. In a recent discussion with an academic colleague reference was made to an institution which offers graduate degrees in education through directed independent study. When my associate brought up the dreaded "M-O-D" phrase (i.e., mail order degree), I pointed out that there are now well over one hundred accredited post-secondary programs in the U.S. offering degrees through external study. He responded by pointing out how little literature there seemed to be on the subject, even in the popular professional press, that might make conventional educators a bit more open minded about distance education practices (Since 1982, I have noted less than a dozen articles related to distance education in The Chronicle of Higher Education).

A good deal of popular writing on distance education learning is still preoccupied with defending out-of-classroom instructional methods as noble and efficacious, but most authors seem to leave it to others to provide the data to support their contentions. Ten years ago the excuse was that there was not yet enough research; unfortunately, we still do not have at our disposal sufficient evaluation research to document our work. Advancing distance education demands adaptive policies to meet changing circumstances and new needs; this requires persuasive evidence derived from ongoing research, but we must be willing to document, analyze and understand our failures as much as our successes.

Most distance education literature today follows the pattern of adult education literature in vogue twenty-five years ago (i.e., case studies with little, if any, empirical data). As distance education programs became more prevalent into the 80s, much of the early research literature was in the form of evaluation studies designed to present data that could be used to fend off skeptics and critics of this growing phenomenon. As was the case with adult educators, planners and administrators attempting to introduce innovation into traditional settings during the "let a thousand flowers bloom" era in higher education during the 1960s and 70s, distance educators in the 1980s have been so preoccupied with establishing effective programs and practices, that relatively little attention has been devoted to research. While more insightful writing and analysis supported by data is now common in adult education (e.g., Brookfield), few distance education authors have moved in this direction.

At the 1991 Research Symposium on Distance Education, current literature in the field was characterized as: descriptive, ad hoc, non-generalizable, evaluative, non-theoretical, applied, historical, quantitative and methodologically poor. Perhaps we have not yet adequately discerned what is really important to learn through research, or what theories can be derived from practice. In our zealousness to examine methodological matters, we have largely ignored ideological issues in distance education. We focus on instructional delivery systems, but we eschew contextual considerations, particularly if there are paradoxical or political considerations to address. And we certainly have not integrated much that can be learned from the rich research and writing in the adult education arena. Consequently, we have accumulated much data related to practice, but we have little to guide us in formulating policy. Although ERIC contains 1400 documents relating to distance education, we have yet to create commonly accepted language and definitions governing distance education, we have yet to establish a national agenda or statewide models for distance education; and we have yet to identify the organizing principles and concepts that unify distance education.

Conference presentations and proceedings also reveal conspicuous lacunae. We have observed the proliferation of state, regional, national and international conferences on distance education with participants representing an amazing array of programs engaged in all manner of education at a distance. Yet, unless it is an event specifically designed to review and report on recent research results, presentations typically are of the "show and tell" variety. For example, the 1988 & 1989 proceedings of the Northeast Distance Education Conference included thirty-four papers; only 14% of these included research references and 45% of the papers were limited to an overview of a single program. This event was widely attended by distance educators and administrators from the entire northeast region of the country, yet the overall quality of papers left much to be desired in making a respectable contribution to research literature in the field.

It is not only the lack of adequate attention to solid research in the field that is troubling; there are also very basic issues regarding the soundness of research methods utilized to assess distance learning outcomes. White (1991) has made some particularly insightful observations about the state of evaluation research in distance education, especially with regard to the effectiveness of instruction on student learning. She notes that we do not yet know if technology-assisted instruction aids student learning because it has not yet been tried at sufficiently high enough levels and frequency to test its impact; because the curricula in use today is inappropriate to the skills students need for the future; and because our evaluation research methods are archaic. For example, we teach via imagery then attempt to measure learning outcomes with pencil tests. White argues that because distance education is primarily a visual teaching medium, visual evaluation is most appropriate. In short, she advised that we use the same medium to test as is used to teach. This deceptively simple yet fundamental rule should apply to all our evaluation efforts in distance education - match research methodologies to instructional modalities (White 1991, 285).

Evaluation research needs to address new areas of inquiry and move beyond the standard questions regarding student attrition and which technology works best. Following is a suggested research agenda around instruction-related issues (developed at the 1991 Research Symposium on Distance Education):

- How best to evaluate quality of materials?
- Are certain media more suitable to the learning styles of certain students?
- How do we best facilitate interaction in distance education settings?
- What incentives are most effective to facilitate interaction?
- What facilitates or impedes effective learning regardless of the medium?
- How to integrate the teacher's dual role of instructing and processing?
- What should we ask distance learners about what is helpful for them?
- What can we learn from the earlier low-technology/external degree/distance education programs?
- What are the critical teacher support systems needed to enhance distance

instruction?

- What conditions are essential for creating a supportive learning environment?
- How do we attract non-distant learners and classroom-bound teachers to utilize distance education options?
- What "Principles of Good Practice" for distance educators can we derive from current research?

Despite significant additions to the corpus of literature on distance education during the past decade, there are numerous other critical questions regarding this mode of learning which have yet to be adequately researched. At this stage in the distance education research agenda, questions about which technology works best is not a priority research issue. We need systematic and collaborative research relevant to the future of distance education, and we need to ask new and fundamental questions relating to pedology: Can independent learners fully develop the skills necessary for learning without face-to-face interaction with the teacher? If direct experience, augmented by lectures, discussions and peer interaction is important for learning, can the independent study environment provide the necessary conditions for the learning process to thrive? Does learning at a distance allow for reflective learning which some learners utilize for optimum cognitive development? If face-to-face classroom encounters are increasingly replaced by tutors and students performing their respective roles at a distance, if instructors are steadily replaced by machines, and if learners work in isolation from one another, will the affective skills largely developed through human interaction be lost? What impact will the changing role of teaching at a distance have on the image and status of teachers accustomed to a visible and dominant presence in the classroom?

How can we more reliably assess resources and determine needs in order to effectively implement the most appropriate distance learning approaches in developing countries? Further, once established, do distance education programs have any significant impact in ameliorating social problems and stimulating change in emerging nations? Can such efforts contribute to both individual advancement and social goals? In countries where major distance learning systems have been implemented and have been in operation for some time, have such efforts contributed to greater self sufficiency and movement away from the oppressive social control that permeates many societies? Or, when linked with pervasive mass media, have such systems become powerful tools to teach people what to think rather than assist them in developing democratic skills? If a primary rationale for distance learning is to increase access to educational opportunity for greater numbers without time and place constraints, yet at the same time requiring the purchase of home-based learning aids well above the typical cost of books and other printed materials, then will technologically-assisted learning be limited to the more affluent learners of a society?

It is important to recognize and acknowledge that research in distance education, as in other areas of inquiry, has an action-oriented dimension to it. Through research, we can isolate lacunae that exist and be guided toward new and provocative questions which can ultimately enhance our practice. Even more immediate applications of research findings are possible when we reflect on our current practice, intervening and altering our approaches as appropriate with the benefit of the data at hand. In this way, we are able to research our practice and concurrently practice our research.

This paradigm is convincingly explicated by Donald Schon in his work, The

Reflective Practitioner (1983). Schon advocates that practitioners in the various service professions "reflect in action" as a dynamic means of enhancing their practice. A practitioner who engages in reflective practice can question the definition of his/her task, the training and the theories he/she brings to it, and the measures and outcomes of performance. In this process, the practitioner reflects on the elements of knowledge and skill he/she brings to bear on practice, and thus may arrive at new insights regarding the assumptions, techniques, values, and purposes imbedded in his/her initial presumptions and ongoing training function effectively in a particular profession.

Reflection-in-action is an essential process by which professionals can assess the efficacy of their practice and initiate appropriate interventions and adjustments designed to enhance their roles. It can lead to new concepts of how to better integrate research and practice and how to impact upon the learning systems of professional institutions. It is also a means by which the practitioner can identify areas in which continuing professional training and further research is required.

Although distance learning programs now exist in diverse forms within and beyond the United States, their proliferation still has not led to the establishment of any fully recognized and reliable source of expertise which institutional planners and decision makers may rely upon for guidance. And until there exists more widely accepted principles of good practice for distance educators, then distance education as a distinct profession will remain undefined and undervalued. A more comprehensive theory of distance learning must be articulated through additional research and evaluation if we are to increase the awareness of others to the philosophy, methods and efficacy of distance learning.

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Track E

Teaching and Advising

THE STUDENT AS INTEGRATOR IN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY

by

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Interdisciplinary degree programs have become common on college and university campuses. Although their features vary greatly from program to program, they all face the challenge of providing for the intellectual task of integration and synthesis of diverse disciplinary perspectives. Who is responsible for doing this necessary integrating--of ideas, theories, methods and strategies for problem solving?

In practice, interdisciplinary programs often assign the role of integrator to the faculty who design the curriculum and present the program's intellectual content to the students. Others assign responsibility to the students who are expected to draw a variety of perspectives together in an individual focus of their own. Both types of interdisciplinary programs have their particular pitfalls and challenges. In faculty-centered programs, the goal of interdisciplinary integration often demands team-teaching strategies, interpersonal cooperation, and a faculty consensus about values that is difficult to maintain in practice. On the other hand, in student-centered programs, it is often unclear to the students what the process is for establishing an integration of diverse perspectives on a problem or issue. Students can flounder in the variety of ideas that are presented to them, and the essential synthesis that is assumed to be important never really occurs.

Although the problems and challenges of faculty-centered interdisciplinary programs are interesting and important, I am primarily concerned today with the student-centered variety. My chief reason for wanting to focus on student-centered programs is that they are often the point at which interdisciplinary and non-traditional, as program characteristics, intersect. In other words, educational programs that began from a student-centered, individualizing philosophy have often found themselves becoming increasingly interdisciplinary as they respond to the personal and professional interests and goals that motivate their students. Conversely, programs that began as interdisciplinary efforts have often become more student-centered as "pre-packaged" forms for bringing about intellectual integration have proven too rigid or elusive.

Student-centered interdisciplinary programs have a certain appeal, especially for today's adult, mid-career student population. Adult students often come to college motivated to deal with real world problems, for example, preserving the environment, or increasing multi-cultural understanding. Student-centered programs are attractive to them because such programs assume that the learner is a responsible decision-maker, capable of participating in the design of his or her education. The student can individualize the educational experience, and alternative programs often make use of some form of learning contract, either for certain courses, or for the degree program as a whole. However, the disadvantage and the challenge of such student-centered, interdisciplinary programs is that they demand considerable responsibility on the part of the student. Students in these programs need to know how to make educational decisions that in other kinds of programs are made by faculty--for example, course sequence, requirements, assessment of needed skills and knowledge. Students also need to have a sophisticated understanding of academic requirements, standards and practices in order to design their own programs.

How one provides a framework of support and guidance for the development of student decision-making ability and increased familiarity with academic practice is the theme of this presentation. Issues to be touched on include: the faculty's role; students' goals; using autobiography and narrative; models and definitions of interdisciplinary study; and, quality control.

The Faculty's Role

In a student-centered program, students need to encounter faculty in two different roles. First, the student will be experiencing faculty as teachers of subject matter, or content. Second, students need faculty to function as counselors or mentors who support the process of creating an individualized synthesis of ideas. At this point, the faculty role does not differ significantly from that of traditional programs, many of which, particularly at the graduate level, need faculty to do both direct teaching and the mentoring that will assist the student to produce a final product or thesis. However, in the individualized program, the faculty must do a much more self-effacing job of supporting the student's learning processes. If the student is to be truly self-directed, within an interdisciplinary framework, it is incumbant upon the faculty to find ways to strengthen the selfhood, the autonomy, and the individuality of the student. This is a process, and it differs considerably from the traditional one in which faculty seek to bring students' thinking into greater conformity with their own. It is possible within the framework of the student-centered, interdisciplinary program that a faculty member's thinking might gradually shift into greater conformity with that of the student! As one might expect, the process through which students and faculty negotiate their respective points of view about the meaning and components of a degree program cannot be left to chance. It must become an integral part of the structure of the program. For example, in Sangamon State University's Individual Option Program, students begin this process of exploration and negotiation in an introductory seminar, entitled "Self-Directed Learning," in which instructor and students explore issues connected with definitions of self, power, autonomy and the learning process in higher education. This first course is followed immediately by a second requirement, a "Colloquium," in which students produce written drafts of their proposals for their own learning. These proposals are eventually reviewed by a committee of three faculty and two peers chosen by the student, all of whom must approve the final proposal.

If it is an assumption of the degree program that it is the student who is responsible for integrating interdisciplinary subject matter, and he or she is expected to produce individualized products, then it is clear that the self-development of the student becomes an important goal of the program. The academic integrity of the educational program rests then on the integrity of the process by which the student's selfhood is mobilized to become the locus of intellectual integration.

Students' Goals

How is the process of synthesis and integration likely to proceed for the student? As information and ideas are encountered, the student will select and disgard, remember or forget what is presented according to personal judgments of relevance that stem from what are often unarticulated and unchallenged objectives (Knowles, 1980; Richardson, Eysenck and Piper, 1987). When students are asked to clarify their goals, and to use them to justify the direction that their educational process will take, there is an opportunity for faculty and students to confront the fit or lack thereof between what is required to obtain a degree, and what the student really wants to accomplish by getting the degree.

Students remember facts, ideas and strategies that they can relate to a direct personal, professional or educational need, and the manner in which they integrate concepts and strategies will be determined by how well those concepts and strategies serve to help them meet actual existential challenges (including those set by faculty). As a result, a formal programmatic requirement seems essential that will compel students to articulate their goals and subject them to open debate and discussion in relation to their appropriateness to serve an integrating function for their degree program. For example, in the Individual Option Program at Sangamon State University, students prepare degree proposals outlining their proposed course of study during their first semester in the program. The student's curricular choices are invariably determined by what it is that the student is trying to accomplish. During the eighteen year history of this program, the faculty has learned that without clear, well rationalized, appropriate goals to organize the student's choices, the entire proposal fails. This is because a self-directed educational program derives its integrity from the integrity of the self which provides the direction. And, that self in turn gains its integrity from the consistency of its motivations, values, past habits, hopes, dreams, and the clarity with which these can be articulated and communicated to others. The process of helping students to clarify goals has emerged for our individualized, interdisciplinary program as an important academic exercise, and it is included in the syllabus of our introductory seminar.

Autobiography and Narrative

Within the discipline of psychology, there are newly emerging definitions of the self that posit its structural integrity in the narratives that we tell ourselves and each other, as individuals and as a society (Bruner, 1990; Polkinghorne, 1988; Sarbin, 1986). Rather than viewing the self as a kind of fixed and inviolable core, the newer view sees the self in continuous process of definition in relationship to others and to a social context. This interactive and dialogic view of the self has penetrated the thinking of educators who are viewing the writing of autobiographies and other life narratives as a powerful tool for learning (Coles, 1989; Witherell and Noddings, 1991).

Inasmuch as life goals emerge in self-directed interdisciplinary education as a major shaper of the integration of learning, autobiography as a statement of why and how such life goals have developed becomes and essential way to explore with students the sources of integration and self-direction. The question of where we have been is the mirror side of where we are going. As a result, including an autobiographical statement as a required component in a proposal for self-designed learning forces students to examine and articulate the past collection of habits, biases, commitments, values, hopes and dissappointments that are shaping their way of life and continuing to shape their future goals. By using autobiographical statements as a basis for dialogue among students and faculty, these habits, biases, values, etc., can be explored, sometimes challenged, and some times affirmed. But, the end result of the dialogue is increased self-knowledge on the part of the students, and increased understanding on the part of faculty about how to provide learning opportunities and challenges for particular students.

A caution is in order, however, since whenever our life stories are opened up for public discussion, powerful feelings are aroused. Classrooms can be turned into unplanned group therapy sessions, and faculty can legitimately protest their lack of training for such activities. At Sangamon State University, we have found that the autobiographical narrative is an extremely useful educational tool. By limiting classroom assignments to those life events that relate to the student's development as a learner, and deliberately focusing on the emerging learning needs of the student, it is possible to use autobiographical writing assignments productively to strengthen the capacities of students for self-directed learning and intellectual integration of course content. By setting group ground rules for how discussion can procede in dealing with life events, and providing a referral to campus counselors for those students who express a need to explore personal issues further, it is possible to create a classroom atmosphere in which considerable individual learning takes place, and learning proposals are improved. By being given the opportunity to explore past learning, prior life experience, recurring patterns of learning (or failing to learn), and current academic strengths and weaknesses, students are in a much better position to direct their own learning activities than if they remain less self aware. Furthermore, the kind of sharing that surrounds the production of autobiographical texts has the effect of encouraging group cohesion and the development of peer relationships that are often enormously helpful to both students and faculty.

Models and Definitions of Interdisciplinary Study

In interdisciplinary programs, it is important that students come to grips with the problem of how various discipline-based perspectives are related to each other. This is an essential step toward intellectual integration. Typically, students organize their studies around an often vaguely articulated problem or set of problems that they wish to address. They see the function of disciplines or university departments as providing resources for learning about how to solve these problems. For today's adult students, the problems often have their origins in the workplace, or are related to an ethical commitment, for example, providing better social services. Students have usually given little thought to how academic disciplines are to be related to each other or to their questions.

Defining "interdisciplinary" is not easy to do, However, various sources (e.g., Klein, 1990; Meeth, 1978; OECD, 1972) suggest that definitions arise as a result of assumptions about how many and which disciplines are involved, the degree to which discipline-based knowledge is altered in the process of contact with other disciplines, and mechanisms by which disciplines are to be brought together. In practice, "interdisciplinary" is a generic term that can also mean crossdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, pluridisciplinary, or transdisciplinary.

Crossdisciplinary study utilizes the theories or methods of one discipline to examine data produced within the framework of another discipline. For example, a student may want to develop a psychological understanding of people from other cultures. In this case, the data (i.e., information about other cultures) are produced within the framework of anthropology and examined using methods and theories from psychology.

Multidisciplinary study involves several disciplines which may have no intrinsic relationship, interaction or mutual development. For example, a student may want to understand how musical composition has evolved in relation to the historical development of mathematics. Here, theories and concepts from the disciplines of history, mathematics and music are brought to bear on a specific issue. However, the separate disciplines maintain their own integrity in the process.

Pluridisciplinary study assumes that there is an intrinsic relationship between certain disciplines that permit them to be grouped together into clusters--for example, the humanities, the social sciences. Commonalities in historical tradition and origins, epistemology and methods, or ideology make is easier to combine certain disciplines than others, hence the traditional tri-partite division of higher education into the humanities (arts and letters), the social sciences, and the sciences.

Interdisciplinary study appears to require a genuine reciprocity of intellectual frameworks, in which knowledge derived from one is altered and enriched through use of another. When such hybridization occurs, new "disciplines" sometimes emerge and become established as bodies of knowledge, for example, biochemistry, psycholinguistics, and ethology. It is rare that students propose genuine interdisciplinary pursuits, although they may often wish to carry out their studies within an emerging framework for which their university does not have an existing program of study. In this case, it is often unclear how much responsibility the student needs to take for studying each discipline separately.

Transdisciplinary study is the most radical approach to the problems and limits of the disciplinary organization of colleges and universities. It involves establishing a set of principles that transcend and incorporate disciplinary ways of thinking. Two approaches to transdisciplinary work that have gained some recognition as well as criticism are structuralism (Piaget, 1973) and general systems theory (Jantsch, 1975).

These various options, which are not exhaustive of the possibilities, suggest that students' and sometimes faculty's definition of interdisciplinary may be unclear or there may be no real group consensus. If the interdisciplinary program is to have credibility, it must be able to define its relationships to discipline-based knowledge. Without such definition, the program is likely to be perceived as incoherent, trying to be "all things to all men (and women)", or lacking in intellectual credibility. Furthermore, if integration is to have any meaning in relation to students' education and learning, it is necessary for a program to grapple with the problem of models for how relationships are established between various theories, concepts and methods of study. Frequently, students are more aware of the limits of the disciplines than they are of the challenges in trying to avoid these limits. Getting students to think about the distinction between theories and methods, as well as the relationships between them becomes important. Students need to know from where they are drawing the sources of their knowledge, and how knowledge claims are to be supported.

In Sangamon State University's Individual Option Program, a seminar which focuses on principles of integration as well as plans for a final demonstration of skill in inquiry is a requirement for all students at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. This seminar is a beginning, but we have not successfully achieved the degree of clarity about interdisciplinary models that I am proposing as a goal.

Quality Control

No discussion of interdisciplinary, individualized alternative degree programs would be complete without reference to strategies for quality control. Frequently, it is the strength of the quality control mechanisms that make the difference in colleageal acceptance of an alternative program. Quality control mechanisms are a factor in external accreditation as well.

With the increasing emphasis on assessment, nationwide, evaluating the quality of students' work at the beginning of the program as well as at the end is an essential step. A midpoint evaluation is also helpful to both students and faculty.

In the Individual Option Program at Sangamon State, the student produces a product during the first semester--a written degree proposal. The proposal must include a statement of the student's educational, professional, and personal goals; an autobiographical analysis of prior learning and experience, strengths and weaknesses as a learner, educational values, and principle commitments; specific curricular objectives and proposed ways for meeting those objectives including coursework and independent study. This proposal is evaluated in first draft form by the instructor of the introductory seminar, and later finalized by the student's committee of three faculty members and two peers. It includes self-assessment by the student, and this self-assessment is negotiated as part of the committee's deliberations.

Another evaluation point occurs midway in the student's progress toward the degree, and it is related to the project of intellectual integration and development of an interdisciplinary understanding. In Sangamon State's program, a second required course, the Integrative Seminar, requires that students produce a written term paper in which they focus on how their educational experiences so far are related to each other. This paper is then evaluated by the instructor of the seminar. A second written document is also required at this time--a preliminary proposal for the final demonstration of achievement. Undergraduates propose a term paper, and master's students propose either a thesis or the doumentation of an applied project. Again, these products are evaluated first by the course instructor, and then finalized by the student's degree committee. At this point, a new member, who is appointed by the Dean of Liberal Arts and Sciences, joins the student's degree committee for the purpose of making sure that the student's proposed final project is in keeping with the overall standards of the university.

A final checkpoint for evaluating the quality of students' academic work in general, and the degree of interdisciplinary integration that has been achieved, is the meeting of the student's degree committee to review the final product. The product must be approved by the committee in order for the student to graduate.

The above strategy for maintaining quality control of students' academic work relies heavily on the faculty's judgments and consensus about academic standards. By making these evaluations in committee deliberations, a consensual process is maintained. With the addition of a new faculty member midway in the process, a new perspective can be introduced and questions about the process renegotiated. However, the process requires that faculty performance in these roles be evaluated.

It is desirable to have student feedback about faculty's relative success and failure in helping students with the challenge of intellectual integration and their overall performance as committee members. Frequently, alternative degree programs rely on traditional strategies for evaluation faculty, for example, classroom evaluations plus considerations of research, community service and university service contributions. These roles of faculty may not be the most salient in an individualized, interdisciplinary program. It seems essential for alternative degree programs to create a feedback system that includes students' perspectives as well as that of faculty peers about the performance of individual faculty members as advisors, counselors, tutors and mentors. Faculty need to be evaluated on the basis of the actual responsibilities and roles that they carry out in the program. This is not something that the Sangamon State program has yet achieved.

Conclusion

I conclude this presentation with two cautions. First, if a program is to be genuinely interdisciplinary, faculty and students need to pay explicit attention to the definitions and models of interdisciplinarity that they are using in constructing curriculum, learning experiences, and degree products, such as theses or senior papers. Furthermore, if the program has has one of its goals the integration of knowledge then both faculty and students needs to be clear about where the locus of this integration is. If, as I have discribed in this paper, a program assumes that it is a student's responsibility to integrate a diversity of perspectives then it follows that explicit focus on students' processes for achieving this integration will need to be a hallmark of the program. Specifically, the individuality of the student and his or her goals, background, and abilities must be clarified, and socially negotiated within a framework of academic discussion and debate. This is the second major point that I wish to make: that the selfhood of the student is at stake in the integration process, and an exploration of self-development and of the social construction of the self enters the educational arena in a compelling way. Obligation for fostering this self-development falls to faculty who must integrate it into their roles as classroom teachers, advisors and mentors. In this way, individualized, interdisciplinary degree programs can be truly developmental for both students and faculty.

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TEAM TEACHING AND INTERDISCIPLINARY COURSES

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Introduction

This presentation will address the value and techniques of team teaching in interdisciplinary studies. The series of courses on European history and the visual arts, Eons and Arts: Manifestations of Culture, which is taught at DePaul University's School for New Learning, models collaborative learning. The goals of these courses are to blend disciplines, to compare perspectives, to give students access to fields which they perceive to be esoteric, and to explain the role of this sort of study in an accurate assessment of world history. This paper will show how these goals are accomplished, and how other courses can be adapted to this model. Furthermore it will provide a learning rationale for an interdisciplinary approach to European civilization courses which helps students put this monolith of liberal arts education in perspective.

At DePaul University's competence based college for adults, the School for New Learning (SNL), the curriculum is focused on competence rather than on disciplines. Teachers must present the underlying purposes and assumptions of their topics. They must focus on their applications and consider their relationships to other areas within the liberal arts. The outcomes of learning are the central issue, and teachers use these as guidelines for curriculum development.

The Courses

Adult students are no strangers to problem solving. Consider purchasing a home, choosing a child's school, or something as simple as deciding on a vacation spot. Most adults do not look at a single dimension of any decision, but go about solving these problems with a series of steps. Children are more likely to be one dimensional problem solvers, and as a result our education system has developed around one dimensional analysis. We teach mathematics, social studies, or history. Unfortunately, this same method of instruction has carried over to college level instruction, particularly in introducing students to new topics. Courses such as Introduction to Art or Survey of History are taught to beginning students, but interdisciplinary courses are reserved for those students who are already schooled in the vocabulary, facts, and goals of the discipline. This discipline based method is also used to teach adult students, who have presumably learned integrative thinking from their experiences.

It is by design and not by accident that some graduate schools of business have adopted the case method as a learning tool to train business leaders. In those case studies, students must assess not only the financial picture of a company, but also its manufacturing potential, its need in the marketplace, its placement in the community, its management style. These programs have altered curricula to reflect the manner in which adults process information.

In addition to offering one-subject courses, we in higher education rarely model collaboration to our students. Yet, in the world outside academia, adults are called upon to collaborate and negotiate. Faculty, teaching and researching alone, unwittingly model the idea that each individual must grasp all the material without assistance, and that this is in some way the ideal. Students who have the advantage of witnessing two instructors combine disciplines and compare perspectives are seeing a problem solving model with which they are already familiar. It is the collaborative, interdisciplinary approach by which business and communities are run.

As teachers in a competence based college program for adults, the authors of this document are mutually interested in the current controversies over the definition of art, its meaning within culture, and the integration of "western" civilization with world history. The interdisciplinary courses which arose from these discussions address the relationship of the social and political history of western culture with contemporary art work. The courses are constructed around the question, "Does art reflect the dominant values of a culture, or does art change values?" The purpose of this question is not so much to help students find a definitive answer as to sort out the various factors which contribute to their reactions. The courses evolved into two segments covering ancient Egypt through the Renaissance, and the Reformation through post World War II Europe respectively.

Because the School for New Learning takes a competence based approach to liberal learning, assessment in this course follows a pattern which allows - in fact, demands - interpretive thinking on the part of the students. The School's competence framework is distributed over five areas, called domains, of liberal learning. Three of these domains - the Human Community, The Physical World, and the Arts of Living - cover content material generally associated with liberal arts curricula. The fourth domain, the World of Work, is dedicated to students' individual concentrations. The fifth domain, Life Long Learning, emphasizes academic skills such as writing as critical thinking, but also addresses students' ability to assess their own academic needs, to define goals, and to design plans to attain them.

The Eons and Arts series meets competences from the three liberal arts domains. Students choose two competences and tailor their projects accordingly. The choices include:

> Can evaluate the contributions of the social institutions to the welfare of the communities they serve;
>
> Can employ techniques of forecasting to project trends and anticipate the future;
>
> Can compare various regions of the earth with respect to the quality of life afforded by their features;
>
> Can explain the function of popular or folk arts in the transmission of culture and values;
>
> Appreciates the values expressed in art, literature, or entertainments.

In addressing competence and the School's competence framework rather than disciplines, students have ready access to the criteria by which they will be assessed. Students are aware that factual knowledge is important, but they also know they must reach some conclusions of their own about the material. "Explaining the function of popular art" implies defining those terms and then suggesting some application of knowledge. Assessment is based on students' knowledge, and on their ability to make something useful of that knowledge.

Furthermore, the competence method also gives students access to fields which might otherwise remain out of reach. Relatively few students seek out art courses on their own. However, seeing art in relation to history clarifies the role of art, and makes it appear less obtuse. This experience itself prepares students for other ventures into fields perceived as impractical.

Students are encouraged to learn from one another as well as from the teacher. While students may not be experts on the content of the course as they begin the experience, they come to realize that they do indeed have some knowledge about the topics. This type of learning is also included in other educational settings. Students in professional graduate programs make use of study groups to learn the material. Cooperative education is gaining precedence at the elementary level. Faculty collaboration can model this process. For example, some students might be able to define Impressionism or to attach dates to the Renaissance. What one student knows can be shared in discussion with others. The teacher is more facilitator than content expert. The teacher asks the right questions, and provides a path to some of the answers. To take advantage of the range of knowledge and experience in each course, faculty design group projects and discussions. Chicago's rich resources provide opportunities for students to see the art they are dealing with first hand. Chicago's Art Institute, and the Oriental Institute at the University of Chicago are the major field resources for the Eons and Arts series.

The study of European culture and of its remnants in American life presents some wonderful opportunities to integrate factual knowledge with current themes in social change. This series aims at helping students see a succession of time periods as they interrelate and to build a perception of history as a field. Ideally, this experience gives students some models and some vocabulary for assessing their own time period. In order to accomplish these aims, students, with the assistance of faculty, outline some purposes for studying history and art. It is particularly important that students consider in this process the value they place on the relativity of truth in these fields. In other words, students must give up their propensity to rely on the experts for both data and its interpretation, that is "truth."

Thus the most important question put to students is "What lessons does History teach?" Students are offered models to use in analyzing historical events to evaluate what learning can be drawn from them and applied to current problems. The model includes queries such as "What are the similarities and differences in two historical situations?" and "What are the critical issues of each situation?" Similarly, students are encouraged to redefine their perceptions of art. Critical issues include addressing the perceived differences in art and craft and the need in culture to produce representative artifacts. The rise of various schools of art can be paralleled with political, social, economic, or scientific change. For example, the effect of the Reformation on painting as a profession in Northern Europe is a fruitful topic for discussion in the second course in the Eons series.

In developing and teaching this series of courses, we have learned that faculty collaboration provides students with the best of both worlds. Not only do faculty members bring specific expertise to the courses, but they also model integrative thinking, that is, the multi-dimensional problem solving process discussed earlier in this document. By studying a subject from several perspectives, students will perforce evaluate several aspects of a course of study. Furthermore, from the teacher's point of view, gaining insight from other disciplines helps put one's own training and bias in perspective.

Students witness this struggle for understanding which is not always evident in the traditional discipline based approach. It is the struggle which makes the material attractive. This lack of controversy is particularly true in survey courses which are designed to present the fundamentals of a field. Survey of Art History courses, for example, are presented as a series of dates, names, and movements. All too frequently students feel incapable of questioning this information. Their opinions about Picasso, or their gut reactions to Michelangelo seem inconsequential in the face of the amassed, official data on these topics. Students who react negatively to the nudity in Michelangelo's work, for example, are onto something about the revolutionary nature of the Renaissance. Our courses encourage students to reach their own definitions, to assess their growth in their knowledge about these fields, and thus to express their views with appropriate vocabulary and informed thinking.

Students and faculty can begin to look beyond the traditional limits of a discipline to the fringes to discover how other disciplines might color it. For example, one student brought a lava lamp as an example of a cultural artifact of the 1960s. While we were not willing to give a definitive reading on the lamp's characterization as art, we were able to shape the ensuing discussion on the nature of art and artifacts, on the character of that period in history, and on analogous artifacts in western culture. It was well worth the venture into the ridiculous.

Adapting the Model

For faculty who are interested in revamping or developing course in this manner, we suggest the following organizing questions:

- How might collaboration with teachers from other disciplines influence your own opinions about your field? How might these differences in thinking benefit your students?

- Describe the point of your discipline. Why would students find the information you provide useful? What will they be able to do as a result of your course?

- Describe how your discipline fits into the scheme of liberal learning. Why is it important that students have the information you make available? In what way will they be more liberally informed after the experience? How does it relate to other fields?

- Remind yourself that you once had questions and dilemmas about your field. What were they? What student questions have stymied you in class?

- What interests you beyond the confines of your discipline? How is this material related to the course you would like to develop?

Once faculty have accepted that working on the margins of a field can be productive, the possibilities involved in calling on students' experience become obvious. While students may not be knowledgeable about the range of the work of Picasso, they do recognize some of it and have some opinions on it. Knowing this can help you clarify some misconceptions and build on some solid foundations.

In the planning stages, faculty can access some of these attitudes through focus groups and surveys. The Eons series grew out of these methods, plus several years' experience with adult learners, and consequent familiarity with their interests, preconceptions and learning needs.

It is also important to divide responsibility and emphasis equally. It is certainly easier to make decisions on your own. Nonetheless, any hesitation in sharing the podium with your colleague will weight the material in the perception of your students.

In choosing course material, it is helpful to avoid information which is interpretive in nature. Original writings of given periods and abundant reproductions form the basis for readings and other course material in the Eons series. Field trips and other hands on experiences provide more fodder for students' growing catalogs of factual information. Rather than being dictated by the experts, interpretation should come from the students themselves.

It is obvious that in a flexible environment like the one provided by the School for New Learning, this type of learning situation is not only possible, but encouraged. Nonetheless, it can be replicated in any environment where faculty are willing to act as conduits to liberal learning, to set practical goals, to look beyond the traditional means of presentation, and to work cooperatively with other faculty and with students.

Conclusions

The Eons and Arts: Manifestations of Culture series has experienced some measure of success in providing the School for New Learning's adult student population with a unique approach to western culture. It has a reputation for developing students' critical thinking skills. It has also provided a good collaboration model for the School's faculty, and has served to link resident faculty with the rich resources of the School's visiting faculty pool.

This series - based on historical periods in western civilization - is not without its detractors. There is a great deal of controversy about the validity of this information and its application in our multicultural environment. We have attempted to deal with this problem in several ways. We have included a variety of sources which go beyond the traditional bounds of western civilization courses. For example, we include some readings on the influence of Native American cultures on European life. We have also, as discussed above, attempted to encourage students in critical thinking techniques which assist them in evaluating not only the material offered in our courses, but also contemporary issues in history and art.

Current plans for the series' growth include application to students who are in the advanced stages of the program, and development of individualized programed learning components which will cover various historical and artistic periods, and a new course modeled on the Eons series on American art, history, and values.

The Logic of Decisions: Adult Learners and Third World Students

by

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§ Introduction

This paper reports on, and offers an explanation of, a case of adult students doing much better than expected (and than other groups of adult learners had) on a standard test designed primarily for adolescent students. The next section outlines the circumstances in which the unexpected results occurred. Following that I outline the phenomena which I wish to explain. I then outline the competing explanations which might account for the phenomena and consider, but reject, some of the more obvious explanations. Thus by a process of elimination (or disjunctive syllogism, if one prefers the term logicians use) I identify two accounts which jointly comprise a partial explanation of the phenomena. I then offer my account of what I think best explains my student's success. In the last sections of the paper I explore some of the implications of my observations for the design of adult education programs.

I should begin with a warning. The processes that I followed were singularly unscientific; I conducted no controlled experiments (and have not even repeated my uncontrolled experiments), my measurements were not precise (and at certain key points I took no measurements), rarely kept notes (relying on my own unreliable memory), and in general my procedures were almost all ones that any good social scientist would reject out of hand. None the less, the results were striking enough that I believe both that there is something to be explained and that my explanations are (roughly) the correct ones.

§ Teaching logic

Though I am neither a logician nor a decision theorist, for the last several years I have been teaching a course in logic and decision theory to North American students.[1] The course I teach is similar to ones taught at most North American universities under such titles as "Basic Logic", "Critical Thinking", "Introduction to Sound Reasoning" and which are almost invariably referred to as "baby logic" courses by those who teach them. At one time there was a widely used standard syllabus for such courses (following what is called the formal logic or Copi model).[2] However, about a decade ago many teachers of logic began to explore a wide variety of ways of teaching logic to college students. The most common alternatives to the Copi model are ones that emphasize informal techniques over formal ones.[3] My baby logic course, like those taught by many others, fits roughly in the middle between those which are devoted almost exclusively to formal logic (the Copi model) and those which eschew the formal approach for a more informal one. The only important respect in which my course differs from the common compromise between the formal and informal approaches is that I devote a fair bit of time and effort to introducing decision theory to my students.

My justification for introducing decision theory to my students is that for the vast majority of them it is more relevant than argument evaluation is.[4] One might (only somewhat misleadingly) characterize inductive logic as the study of what one is entitled to believe given the evidence available to one, and deductive logic as the study of what additional beliefs one is justified in holding given one's existing belief set. Decision theory, by contrast, can (again, only slightly misleadingly) be characterized as the study of what one ought to do given one's beliefs and desires. It is no surprise that academics--people who devote their lives to critical reflection on what one is warranted in believing--would, when designing logic courses, devote such courses to those areas concerned with what one should believe. But, most of our students are less interested in what one should **believe** than they are in what one should **do**. They are neither academics, nor do they aspire to become academics. Much of their thinking is, and will be, devoted to deciding what they should do. Very little of their thinking concerns what they should believe. Decision theory, then, is more clearly relevant to their lives.

Having decided to devote some of my baby logic classes to decision theory rather than the more standard areas of logic, I began searching for an appropriate text. Not being able to find one after several years of looking (each year giving my students more and more handouts), I finally decided to prepare my own text.

Over the period that I was sidling up to the idea of producing a logic text for my own logic classes I frequently taught adult students. Sometimes they were mixed in the classes with my adolescent students, on other occasions they were de facto segregated in my evening classes. Over this period I often noticed that what seemed to work well with my teenage students was inappropriate for my adult students and what would work for the adults would bomb with my younger students. Gradually, I began to develop some skill at sorting what would do best where but I was never able to articulate the criteria by which I did the sorting and was quite baffled at what principles might be at work.

§ Grades

My students are graded on the basis of both tests and assignments which are given a numerical mark. The maximum grade possible on all the tests and assignments is 105. The student's grades are totalled and her mark converted to a letter grade using the following scale:

95-105 A+	90-94 A	85-89 A-
80-84 B+	75-79 B	70-74 B-
65-69 C+	60-64 C	55-59 C-
50-54 D		
0-49 F		

I do not adjust my grades to attain any specific spread of grades, I recycle tests over the years, and the results rarely vary from the following range. For adolescent students the grades are (from most common to least common):

B-, C+, B, C, B+, C-, A-, D, F, A+, A.[5]

Basically, grades in the C range are most common (just over 30%), in the B range second most common (just under 30%), in the A range third (about 20%), with those in the D or F categories fewest (roughly 10% each).

Sheldon Wein

My adult students do better than my adolescent ones by about 10 marks per student. This results in more grades in the B range than any other. Grades in the A and C range are about equal and Ds and Fs quite rare.

§ Teaching logic in developing countries

During the period that I was slowly coming to the view that I should produce my own logic text, I was, for quite independent reasons, developing an interest in education in developing countries.[6] During this period I had a series of discussions with Professor William Barthelemy of the University of Ghana (Legon) about teaching logic. He and I share many views about what material a good "baby logic" course should cover. Furthermore, he faced two of my pedagogic problems in an amplified way. I had sometimes rejected texts I would have liked to have tried, not because I thought the basic approach was flawed, but because the text was either too expensive for many of my students or because it was written in a style aimed at students from different socio-economic classes than those most of my students come from. It often seemed to me that every author--or every publisher(?)--of logic texts thinks that every logic student is an academically inclined teenager from an upper middle-class family. Barthelemy's students all lacked the financial ability to purchase texts for his logic classes. (And his school lacked the financial resources for him to provide them with extensive photocopied material.) Another problem was that, even if a text were available without cost, all the texts used examples more appropriate to developed countries than developing countries so that, even if his students had texts, they would have been of limited use. I took his second problem to be just a case of my second problem amplified.

My initial reaction was to try to solve the first problem by getting my students in North America to donate their text to Barthelemy's students in Ghana. My habit of selecting a different text every time I taught the course pretty well cut off the used book market, something about which I felt somewhat guilty. Consequently, I was delighted to think that by encouraging my students to donate their used texts to those unable to afford them, my students would both help out those in need and ameliorate my guilt.

But, the second problem was not so simple. There simply are no logic texts in print which were written with third world students in mind. Why would there be? There is no market for such texts.

This was how the original idea of producing teaching materials appropriate for both American universities serving working class students and students in West Africa came about. I began sending Barthelemy materials I had been using in my North American logic classes. He faithfully wrote back informing what he found useful and what was, well, garbage.

§ The project

After I visiting the University of Ghana, consulting with Barthelemy, talking with his students, and giving some lectures, I decided to modify my logic materials into a text which would be useful both to students in my logic classes in Canada and to students in Barthelemy's logic classes in Ghana. The idea being that, once I got the text organized, I would have it produced as cheaply as possible and distribute it to my students at Saint Mary's University. Each student there would pay only those costs associated with producing the text. At the end of my course each of my students would be asked to donate their text to a student in Ghana.[7]

I decided that, before it was appropriate to ask students to pay for a text I had written partly in the hopes that they would then donate it to other students, I should go through my materials once in class. Thus, in the fall of 1990 I ordered no text for my logic classes and simply relied on handouts covering all the materials I regularly cover in my logic course. (In previous years I had always ordered at textbook for the students and then supplemented the textbook with extensive handouts.) To some extent, I tried to prepare the material in a way that would make it useful both to my students in Canada and to those who might use it in Ghana. However, I found less time to do this over the summer than I had hoped and, consequently, I found myself giving my students materials which I had prepared with them in mind but had not modified to make it useful to Ghanaian students. I revised my plan and decided that over the term I would find the time to adapt my logic materials for use both in Canada and in Ghana. The product was to be the text that my students in subsequent years would use and, at the end of the course, donate for shipment to Ghana for students to use there.

I did not tell my students what the plan was, wanting to get their reaction to it after I had used the materials on them. But, early in the term one of my adult students found out what I was doing. Soon, a group of adult students presented themselves as volunteers to help me adapt my teaching materials for use in Ghana. I did not encourage them for two reasons. First, I thought--and I conveyed this to them--that they would be better off devoting their time to studying the materials I was providing than to revising those materials for students in a country they knew little about. Second, I suspected their input would be of little help to me and that dealing with it would take up too much of my time. But, when they were insistent that they wanted to help, I relented. I insisted that any suggestions they had be ones that they had jointly agreed on and that they type both their suggested changes and their reasons for them. In addition, I made them understand that I might not use any of their suggestions and that I could not even guarantee that I would have time to fully consider them. Despite these conditions, nine adult students got together--usually for short meetings before and after my lectures--and went over my materials and suggested changes that would be appropriate. (They each prepared suggestions and brought them to their meetings to discuss which ones should be turned over to me.) I examined their suggestions and incorporated some of them, but rejected others. Whenever I rejected a suggestion I gave them an explanation of why I did so.

§ The results

The results surprised me. First, every student involved in the revision project got a grade in the A range. (Their grades were all assigned in the standard manner and they got no credit at all for their work on the project.) Second, they were much more enthusiastic than most students and their enthusiasm was contagious. The rest of the students in that class did somewhat better than normal. Putting my adult students in the position of having to confront the problems Barthelemy and I faced teaching adolescent students worked amazingly well. My adult students learned more logic and decision theory through helping me develop teaching materials for both Canadian and West African students than I had been able to teach adult students in previous years.

At this point I cannot say to what extent the contributions I got from the group of students were helpful. Certainly, many of their suggestions seemed to me to be quite useful. But, whether they really will be so is something I do not yet know. Finally, I should note that, in my other logic class (taught concurrently and populated almost exclusively with teenagers), there was no change either in the distribution of grades or in the level of student interest.

§ Likely hypotheses

It seems to me that the most obvious hypotheses able to explain the unexpected test results are as follows:

- More work. The students involved in the group put in more time on the project of revising my logic text than other students devoted to mastering the text.
- Better instruction. The quality of instruction in class improved when working with the group of adult learners (perhaps because the instructor was more interested in the approach).
- Native intelligence. The group in question happened to be more intelligent than the average group of students.

Sheldon Wein

- Greater relevance. The material was more relevant to this group of students than to other students.
- More interaction with other students. Because the students were forced by the nature of their project to work together they interacted more with other students than a average group of adult learners would have.
- Connectedness with other knowledge/learning. The project of revising the course materials forced the students to relate the logic materials to other knowledge they had and this increased their retention.

§ Rejected hypotheses

I reject each of the first four hypotheses. I will deal with them in order.

- More work. The students involved in the group reported to me on how much time they devoted both to the course work and to the project. The amount of time was roughly the same as other students report spending on my course. Indeed, some of the students in the group mentioned that on a few occasions they had neglected their logic assignments because of the time they devoted to the task of the group. So, more work will not serve as even a partial explanation of the improved performance.
- Better instruction. I am fairly certain that my lectures did not improve as a result of the fact that I was lecturing to a class of students some of whom I knew to be working away on suggestions on how to revise my class materials. In some circumstances this might be the case. But, this class was held at what turned out to be a very inconvenient time for me and I often went to class tired

and less interested in teaching than I normally am. So, I reject this explanation.

- Native intelligence. Here I have only my own observations to go on and casual external evidence. I can say that this group did not strike me as containing any extraordinarily brilliant students. Furthermore, I know that some of them had trouble with other university level courses they had taken.
- Greater relevance. This cannot be an explanation because the students in the group used the same materials as all other students and their project was to make the materials useful both in Canada and Ghana. None of them had an antecedent interest in Ghana or had ever been there.

If we reject these four explanations, we have only two remaining hypotheses to consider. I turn to that task in the next section.

§ A partial explanation

I think that part of the explanation for the success of the students in the group consists of the fact that each of these students had more interaction with other students than she otherwise would have had, and that the material they were learning was, through their own efforts, connected with other knowledge they had or were acquiring.

As we know, one of the problems faced by many adult students is that they have little contact with other students. Often they are only taking one course, usually it is in the evening, frequently they do not live near the university (and, hence, are unlikely to live next door to a classmate), and their other obligations make them too busy to share much time with other students. Most of the students in the group I dealt with had these characteristics. I expect that, had they not got involved in this joint project, most of the students in the group would have had little contact with their classmates outside the time spent in class. Working in the group changed that.

Second, the work done in the group served to connect the logic material to other things they were learning and, I believe, this aided in their ability to retain the material. I can illustrate this with an example. In illustrating ambiguity, I sometimes use geographic examples. The material I gave the students included an illustration of how the relation "is bigger than" is ambiguous between "has more surface" and "is more populated". While I had used Oklahoma City/St. Louis and the Big Island of Hawaii/Oahu as examples, the group went to the trouble to find a pair of places in West Africa--Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso/Lome in Togo--which illustrated this same feature. I have no doubt that tying what I was trying to teach them about the logic properties of relations with what they learned about West African geography served them well when it came time for them to write their logic tests.

§ The primary explanation

Whatever weight should be given to the explanations above, I think it is safe to say that they are not adequate to explain the full extent of the success of the group of adult students who worked on the project. However, I think we can see the primary reason for their success if we consider carefully just what this project asked my adult students to do. Essentially, it asked them to figure out a good way of conveying information to teenagers. This is something that many adult students have had experience with. Furthermore, it is something which they know is not always easy to accomplish. They took the task seriously and they used their experience to solve the problem they were confronted with. Put bluntly, they concentrated on doing something which they do well. And, as every educator knows, when you get your students concentrating on something you do well, they become excellent students. They learn quickly and they retain most of what they have learned.

When I first started reflecting on why my students did so well, I looked for explanations having to do with the material covered in the course and for explanations related to students from developing countries. I now believe that these features are unimportant. What worked was putting my students in my shoes and having them see the course material from the point of view of the instructor. That is important for two reasons. First, as already mentioned, it relies on their expertise and, consequently, nurtures their self-esteem. Secondly, it makes clear to them something that we often say--but, I suspect, they rarely believe--that in many respects they have an advantage over their adolescent colleagues. Again, this heightens their self-esteem and gives them the confidence they should have.[8]

§ Implications

The implications of this will come as no surprise to anyone who has reflected on the problems of adult education. What our better grade school teachers had us to--break into groups and collectively undertake some task related to what is being taught--works just as well (maybe even better) with adult learners. With adult students one can easily add to this simply by putting the adult student in the instructor's place. Confront them with the pedagogic problems you face and ask their advice. In the course of giving you that advice they will learn whatever it is they are supposed to be learning from you. The nice thing about the project my students came up with is that it both has wide application (there are lots of third world educators who need all kinds of materials to help them out) and it has substantial beneficial side effects (helping third world students is something that should be of concern to most educators).

§ Instead of a conclusion

I have devoted this paper to describing and trying to explain the primary effects of the project. Some of the secondary effects are not yet known. The logic text is finally completed and my logic class is now using it. I think it will serve them well. Once the course is completed each member of my class will be asked to donate her text to a student at the University of Ghana.[9] Barthelemy has seen the text and thinks it will work well for students in Ghana. I hope we are both right. Happily, one of the secondary effects is known. That is the effect on the instructor involved. I report that it is more fun having adult students learn by (trying to) tell you how to teach, than it is by (trying to) teach them directly.[10]

NOTES

1. Though I unwittingly followed Bertrand Russell's advice ("On How I Write" in The Basic Writings of Bertrand Russell, New York, 1961) and filled my first serious academic paper with enough symbolic logic to make it virtually incomprehensible, my subsequent publications have made only the most sparing use of formal symbolic techniques. Although I have made no contributions to logic (and have made but very minor contributions of decision theory), I frequently find occasion to use decision theory in my research, though only as a means, never as an end in itself.

2. Because of Irving Copi's classic text, Introduction to Logic.

3. There are now many good texts which follow this path. The best I know of is Argument Evaluation by Wayne Grennan (University Press of America, 1984).

4. The causes of my teaching decision theory at the expense of other areas of logic have to do with the fact that my research involves the use of decision theory rather than other branches of logic. That I started teaching decision theory on a day when I arrived at class unprepared to lecture on logic cannot be cited as a justification without committing the genetic fallacy.

5. The only variation from this is that sometimes there are more Fs than Ds. I suspect that occurs when I am not diligent enough in reminding students of the date by which the registrar will allow them to drop the course.

6. Most of my research work it in jurisprudence and political theory. This led to an interest in ethical issues in international development and, consequently, to higher education systems in developing countries.

7. Transporting the books was to be piggybacked on the Philosophy Books to West Africa Program, a program through which Halifax philosophers have donated over a thousand books to the University of Ghana.

8. I have strong evidence that this occurred. All but one of the students contacted since the course ended to see how well I was progressing with the text. Most have gone on to take additional courses.

9. Students at Saint Mary's University pay only for the cost of providing them with the text. They are free not to donate their text. (I don't know who has donated a text or even how many have been donated until after all grades have been submitted.) The cost of transporting the texts to Ghana is not charged to the students either at Saint Mary's University or at the University of Ghana.

10. I am particularly grateful to Professor William Barthelemy of the University of Ghana for his assistance. I thank Thea E. Smith for her encouragement with this project. My research was supported by grants from the Saint Mary's University Senate Research Fund and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Those readers interested in seeing a copy of Logical Basics (the textbook discussed in this paper), should write to me at the address at the head of this paper.

TITLE

Educational Planning at Empire State College: Faculty Expectations vs Student Aspirations

PRESENTERS

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BACKGROUND

Empire State College is a college of the State University of New York that was established in 1971 to provide alternative higher education to those who may otherwise not have access. The majority of its students are working adults, average age thirty-seven (37). The primary mode of delivery is one-to-one, that is, students meet individually with faculty members, called mentors.

At Empire State College, students engage in a very important activity: the development of their individualized degree program. This activity is called educational planning and involves careful career assessment and planning followed by the development of the curriculum for the student's program. The program typically includes transcript credit from other institutions, requests for credit based on life experience, and proposed work to be done while enrolled at the college.

Students begin a dialogue with their mentors, as faculty at the college are called, during their very first meeting, although the formal development of the program may not occur until months later. Each student is required to enroll for a four-credit study called educational planning. By the end of this study the student is expected to have developed a degree program and at least submitted it to a faculty committee (called an Assessment Committee) for a preliminary review. The degree program consists of a listing of the course titles from the three groups listed above and a rationale for the program. Through the rationale, the student gives background for the degree (educational and career goals), an explanation of the program title, a brief description of the requests for credit by evaluation, and a description of the proposed work to be completed at Empire State College.

In addition to these basic elements, students who are requesting credit by evaluation are also required to submit essays in each of the topics for which they are requesting credit. These essays are then sent to evaluators, who use the essay and an interview with the student to make a recommendation of credit. The recommendation is made in a letter to the Assessment Office.

We had anecdotal evidence that this process was difficult for students, but, until last year, students had not been formally asked about their experience.

In the spring of 1990, a student, Pat Goodspeed, worked with Mentors Lawrence and DuBois in the development of a questionnaire about the educational planning experience. This questionnaire was sent to a randomly-selected sample of students who attended the Genesee Valley Regional Center, which includes Rochester, New York and some regions surrounding it. That questionnaire asked some questions about the student's background and his or her expectations of the college and of his or her educational planning experience.

The majority of the students who responded were the ones who had successfully made it through the process. They expressed general satisfaction with the process, although many of them suggested that the expectations of the college be made clearer and that there be more structure. For example, they wanted more explicit directions on how to write the rationale for the program and essays to support their requests for credit based on previous experiential learning.

As we reviewed the results, we found that we were sometimes surprised by the student responses, especially concerning the student aspirations concerning attaining a degree. We decided to ask faculty at the Rochester Center to predict the student responses. Faculty predictions were found, in many cases, to correspond poorly to the actual student responses.

After a presentation of this preliminary data at a meeting of faculty and administrators from around the college, we were encouraged to duplicate the study college-wide. Questionnaires were developed and sent to all faculty and a sample of enrolled students in April, 1991.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

A copy of each of the questionnaires is included in Appendix A. Students were asked general information to get a sense of their background before they became students at the college, their area of study, and when and if they had completed educational planning. Next, they were asked their reasons for enrollment. This was the area in which the greatest differences from faculty predictions existed in the previous study. They were also asked specific questions about their educational planning experiences.

As you can see from the faculty questionnaire, the faculty were asked to predict student responses on many of the items. Background material was collected on faculty as well.

THE SAMPLE

Questionnaires were sent to all full-time and part-time faculty of the college, which totaled two hundred and fourteen (214). Ninety (90) responded, which is forty-two percent (42%) of the sample. Since some of those who were sent a questionnaire did not engage with students in educational planning (some faculty are hired specifically to work with students in subject matter areas only, such as accounting) and therefore were unlikely to complete the questionnaire, this percentage is considered to be quite acceptable.

For this study, it was decided to survey re-enrolled students only, that is, students who had completed at least one enrollment cycle and begun another. Six hundred students, or about one fourth of this population, were selected randomly from each of seven centers. The amount selected from each center was based on the size of that center at the time of selection. Selection and mailing was completed by the Office of Research and Evaluation at Empire State College. Two hundred and fifty-eight (258) of the students responded, which was 43% of the total sent out.

Tables 1, 2 and 3 in Appendix B give the profile of the faculty and students completing the survey. The areas of study listed are the designated areas for the college. Each center has at least one full-time faculty member in each area listed except Interdisciplinary. Table 2 compares the profile of students participating in the study with college-wide enrollment information, showing that the students who responded were a representative group. Table 3 gives further student information. As you can see, many of the students who returned the questionnaire had completed their degree program planning (76.5%). Also, over eighty percent of these students came with previous college experience.

ANALYSIS

All data was entered on a database and appropriate summary measures were found. They are listed in Tables 4 through 14 in Appendix C.

In Table 4 there is a summary of student ratings of the usefulness of selected resources in the educational planning process. These are compared with faculty predictions of student responses. Of note is the large difference between students' rating of the primary mentor, in which students found the primary mentor less helpful than predicted. Note also that students used fewer resources than predicted and that they were more dependent on written resources than the faculty expected.

Table 5 was developed from an item in which students cited the importance of different factors for their attending college. Although reasons relating to employment (first four) were important to students, they were less important than the faculty predicted they would be. More importantly, broader goals such as enhancing self-esteem and pursuing learning for enjoyment were greatly underestimated by faculty.

Students were also asked to identify the MOST important reason for attending college and these results are summarized in Table 6. The most frequent response for students was to complete a life-long goal, while faculty predicted the most frequent response would be to obtain a better paying job.

In addition, students were asked what characteristics of Empire State College influenced them to enroll at Empire State College rather than at a more traditional college. Responses are summarized in Table 7. For students, flexibility of program and quality of program were more important than predicted (especially quality of program). It was less important than expected that the degree would be obtained in a shorter period of time. Note also the difference between response and prediction on expectations for credit by evaluation or credit for experiential learning. Table 8 again summarizes the item where the most important reason was selected. Predictions were better for this item.

Tables 9 and 10 deal with expected difficulty of work at ESC and a comparison of difficulty with other colleges. Students identify a more realistic assessment than faculty attribute to them in their expectations of difficulty of program (Table 9). Faculty expect students to find the work more difficult than they do, at least in comparison to other colleges (Table 10).

Tables 11-14 deal specifically with the educational planning experience. As you can see from Table 11, students view educational planning as more collaborative than their mentors think they do. Students also find the credit by evaluation essay to be less difficult than mentors anticipate, but they find choosing topics for the degree program to be more difficult (Table 12). Overall, the process is easier than predicted by faculty (Tables 13 and 14), both for those who have completed the process and those who have started, but not yet completed the process.

DISCUSSION

The information summarized above raises some very interesting issues. In many important cases, faculty expectations for students do not correspond with the actual responses of students. Student respondents to the questionnaire attest to far less utilitarian goals for their degree than faculty expect. If this is true, faculty would benefit from cultivating these broader goals as they assist students in degree program planning. Faculty overestimate the expectation of the student that the degree needs to be completed as quickly as possible: the student is possibly more interested in quality and flexibility of program than is assumed. Faculty also overestimate the appraisal of difficulty of the program made by the student.

Since students depend highly on written materials, these materials should perhaps be increased or at least reviewed for effectiveness.

Of course, care must be taken in transferring the characteristics of this sample to all Empire State College students. The sample was selected from students who had successfully completed one contract: it therefore does not include students in their first enrollment and our highest attrition occurs at this time. The majority of the students who responded had completed or were near completion of the process. They, therefore, in many cases, are our success stories. These factors need to be kept in mind when reviewing the data.

NEXT STEPS

The results cited above will be used at the college in faculty development activities and to assist those who develop and update college written materials. As noted above, information is still missing about the students who are so frustrated by the process that they quit: it is strongly recommended that a study be made of this group.

There is a wealth of information in this data and more analysis will be done. For example, regression analysis could be done to see if quantity of previous college experience served as a predictor of satisfaction with the process. Chi-squared tests could be used to compare groups, such as a comparison by area of study. Results of these analyses will be given during the workshop at the ACE/Alliance conference.

NOTE: The authors would like to give special thanks to Tim Lehmann and Mary Edinburgh of the Office of Research and Evaluation for their assistance with the study and their general support of our work.

APPENDIX A

EDUCATIONAL PLANNING SURVEY
Mentor Questionnaire:

I. General Information:

A. Status: Full-Time ______ Part-Time ______
Primary area of study in which you mentor______________________________

B. If you are a part-time mentor, which of the following represents your contracted commitment to ESC:
less than 1/4 time ____ more than 1/4 time but less than 1/2 time ____ more than 1/2 time ____

C. Do you serve as a primary mentor? Yes ___ No ___.
If yes, how many currently enrolled students are you primary mentor for? __________

D. How many years have you been affiliated with ESC? __________

E. With what center are you affiliated? __________
If you are affiliated with a unit, what percentage of you time is devoted to a unit? ________

II. Reasons for Enrollment

A. Following are several reasons often cited for attending college. Please indicate the importance rating you predict your students would assign for each item.

Reasons	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
1) To engage in a different career	( )	( )	( )
2) To obtain a better paying job	( )	( )	( )
3) To satisfy requirements of present job	( )	( )	( )
4) To obtain a different job but not necessarily for more pay	( )	( )	( )
5) To enhance self-esteem	( )	( )	( )
6) To pursue learning for enjoyment	( )	( )	( )
7) To complete a life-long goal	( )	( )	( )
8) To obtain a degree for the sake of getting a degree	( )	( )	( )
9) Other (please specify) ____________	( )	( )	( )

B. Which reason cited in question A do you predict is your students would cite as the most important reason for attending ESC? __________ (Indicate the number of the item above.)

C. Following are several characteristics of Empire State College that are often cited as influencing students to enroll at ESC rather than a more traditional college. For each item, indicate what you believe to be the degree of importance for each item to ESC students.

Reasons	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
1) Flexibility as to interdisciplinary degree program requirements	( )	( )	( )
2) Quality of program in general	( )	( )	( )
3) It fits more closely into my time/work schedule	( )	( )	( )
4) I could obtain a degree in a shorter period of time	( )	( )	( )
5) I prefer independent study to traditional classes	( )	( )	( )
6) I though the work would be easier	( )	( )	( )
7) I expected to receive credit for experiential learning	( )	( )	( )
8) Other (please specify) ____________	( )	( )	( )

D. What do you predict your students would cite as the most important reason for attending ESC from the items listed in question C above? __________ (Indicate the number of the reason above.)

E. What do you believe would be the distribution of 100 students to the question: Prior to enrolling at ESC, what did you think would be the difficulty level of courses at ESC as compared to a traditional college? (The sum of E1 through E4 should be 100.)
1) ____ easier 2) ____ more difficult 3) ____ about the same 4) ____ didn't know

F. What do you believe would be the distribution of 100 students to the question: If you previously attended a postsecondary institution, have you found the coursework at ESC to be: (The sum of F1 through F4 should be 100.)
1) _____ easier 2) _____ more difficult 3) _____ about the same 4) _____ didn't know

G. For each item below, please predict how you think students would rate each of the following resources as to the usefulness to them in the educational planning process.

	DEGREE OF USEFULNESS			
Resource	Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Not Helpful	Didn't Use
1) Primary mentor	( )	( )	( )	( )
2) Other mentors	( )	( )	( )	( )
3) Other professionals	( )	( )	( )	( )
4) Other students/alumni	( )	( )	( )	( )
5) Employer	( )	( )	( )	( )
6) Local libraries	( )	( )	( )	( )
7) College catalogs	( )	( )	( )	( )
8) Portfolio workshops	( )	( )	( )	( )
9) Assessment office personnel	( )	( )	( )	( )
10) Degree program planning guide	( )	( )	( )	( )
11) Friends	( )	( )	( )	( )

H. Based upon the responses of 100 students, what do you predict would be the distribution of responses to the question: Which statement best characterizes the way in which you approached planning your degree program? (The sum of the responses should be 100.)
_____ My mentor told me what to do, and I did it.
_____ I did it "my way."
_____ I had some say but my mentor had the last word.
_____ My mentor and I were equal partners throughout the whole effort.
_____ Other (please specify) ______________________________

I. Based upon the responses of 100 students, what do you predict would be the distribution of responses to the question: What did you find most difficult about the educational planning process? (The sum of the responses should be 100.)
_____ Writing the CBE essay.
_____ Deciding what career/concentration to pursue.
_____ Writing the rationale.
_____ Choosing topics of study for degree program.
_____ Other (please specify) ______________________________

J. Based upon the responses of 100 students, what do you predict would be the distribution of responses to the question: Which statement best characterizes your personal experience with the educational planning process? (The sum of the responses should be 100.)

Part I. For those students who have completed educational planning, predict the distribution of 100 student responses to the following:
_____ It posed no particular problems, and seemed quite easy.
_____ It was painful to go through, but worthwhile in the end.
_____ It was a lot of work, but not particularly difficult.
_____ It was frustrating, and I'm glad it's over.
_____ Other (please specify) ______________________________

Part II. For those students who have started but not completed educational planning, predict the distribution of 100 student responses to the following:
_____ I am in the middle of educational planning, frustrated, with no end in sight.
_____ I am in the middle and things are going fine.
_____ It is hopeless -- I am thinking of giving up and withdrawing.
_____ Other (please specify) ______________________________

Thank You

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EDUCATIONAL PLANNING SURVEY
Student Questionnaire

I. General Information:

A. Current Degree Pursued:
Associate's Degree only ___ Bachelor's Degree only ___ Associate's toward Bachelor's Degree ___

B. What center are you enrolled at? ________________ Unit (if applicable) ________________________

C. Did you attend another college or postsecondary institution prior to your enrollment at ESC?
Yes ___ No ___ If yes, how many semester credits (or the equivalent) had you completed prior to your enrollment at ESC? _______

D. What is your area of study at Empire State College? Select one of the following registered areas of study.
______ The Arts
______ Cultural Studies
______ Educational Studies
______ Historical Studies
______ Human Development
________ Business, Management and Economics
________ Community and Human Services
________ Science, Mathematics and Technology
________ Social Theory, Social Structure and Change
________ Interdisciplinary Studies

E. What is the number of your current ESC contract? _____ How many credits had you earned at ESC through contract study prior to starting your current contract? _______

F. Prior to your enrollment at ESC, did you know what you ESC area of study/concentration would be? (Select the most appropriate answer.)
Yes ___ No ___ I had a general idea, but was not specifically sure ___

G. What is the status of your educational planning contract?
___ recently started, but not yet completed ___ completed ___ not yet begun*
*(*If you mark this selection, skip question H and Section IV. Educational Planning Activities.)*

H. Prior to starting your educational planning contract, had you completed another learning contract at ESC?
Yes ___ No ___ If yes (educational planning was not part of your first contract), how many contracts had you completed before starting educational planning? _____

I. Age _____ Male ___ Female ___ Date of Initial Enrollment at ESC: month ___ year ___
Current Enrollment Status: Full-time ___ Part-time ___

II. Reasons for Enrollment

A. Following are several reasons often cited for attending college. Please rate the importance of each item concerning your decision attend ESC.

Reasons	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
1) To engage in a different career	( )	( )	( )
2) To obtain a better paying job	( )	( )	( )
3) To satisfy requirements of present job	( )	( )	( )
4) To obtain a different job but not necessarily for more pay	( )	( )	( )
5) To enhance self-esteem	( )	( )	( )
6) To pursue learning for enjoyment	( )	( )	( )
7) To complete a life-long goal	( )	( )	( )
8) To obtain a degree for the sake of getting a degree	( )	( )	( )
9) Other (please specify) ____________________	( )	( )	( )

B. Which reason (A1 through A9) cited above is your most important reason for attending college? _____

C. What characteristics of Empire State College, in particular, influenced you to enroll at ESC rather than a more traditional college?

Reasons	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important
1) Flexibility as to interdisciplinary degree program requirements	( )	( )	( )
2) Quality of program in general	( )	( )	( )
3) It fits more closely into my time/work schedule	( )	( )	( )
4) I could obtain a degree in a shorter period of time	( )	( )	( )
5) I prefer independent study to traditional classes	( )	( )	( )
6) I though the work would be easier	( )	( )	( )
7) I expected to receive credit for experiential learning	( )	( )	( )
8) Other (please specify) ____________________	( )	( )	( )

D. Which reason (C1-C8) cited above is the most important reason for your decision to attend ESC? ____

E. What did you think would be the difficulty level of courses at ESC as compared to a traditional college?
1) ____ easier 2) ____ more difficult 3) ____ about the same 4) ____ didn't know

F. If you previously attended a postsecondary institution, have you found the coursework at ESC to be:
1) ____ easier 2) ____ more difficult 3) ____ about the same 4) ____ didn't know

III. Expectation of Credit by Evaluation

A. Before enrolling at ESC, did you know that ESC granted credit for college-level learning gained outside of the traditional classroom? Yes ___ No ___

B. Did you expect to receive credit for college-level learning gained outside of traditional classrooms?
Yes ___ No ___ Uncertain, but hopeful ___

C. If you expected to receive college-level learning gained outside of traditional classrooms, how much credit did you expect to receive? ___ 0-8 ___ 9-16 ___ 17-24 ___ more than 25 credits

IV. Educational Planning Activities

Do not answer questions in this section if you have not begun educational planning.

A. How satisfied were you with the guidance you received from your primary mentor in your educational planning process?
___ Not satisfied ___ Somewhat satisfied ___ Very satisfied ___ Neither satisfied/dissatisfied

B. Did your primary mentor encourage you to attend a portfolio workshop or to take advantage of other activities offered by the assessment office? Yes ___ No ___

C. Overall, how clear were the requirements of your educational planning contract?
___ Quite clear ___ Somewhat clear ___ Not clear

D. Where did you get suggestion for the specific topics of study included in your degree program?
___ Mentor ___ Personal research ___ Friends ___ Other (please specify): ____________

E. Please rate the following resources as to their usefulness to you in the educational planning process.

	DEGREE OF USEFULNESS			
Resource	Very Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Not Helpful	Didn't Use
1) Primary mentor	( )	( )	( )	( )
2) Other mentors	( )	( )	( )	( )
3) Other professionals	( )	( )	( )	( )
4) Other students/alumni	( )	( )	( )	( )
5) Employer	( )	( )	( )	( )
6) Local libraries	( )	( )	( )	( )
7) College catalogs	( )	( )	( )	( )
8) Portfolio workshops	( )	( )	( )	( )
9) Assessment office personnel	( )	( )	( )	( )
10) Degree program planning guide	( )	( )	( )	( )
11) Friends	( )	( )	( )	( )

F. Which statement best characterizes the way in which you approached planning your degree program?
_____ My mentor told me what to do, and I did it.
_____ I did it "my way."
_____ I had some say but my mentor had the last word.
_____ My mentor and I were equal partners throughout the whole effort.
_____ Other (please specify) ____________

G. What did you find most difficult about the educational planning process?
_____ Writing the CBE essay.
_____ Deciding what career/concentration to pursue.
_____ Writing the rationale.
_____ Choosing topics of study for degree program.
_____ Other (please specify) ____________

H. Which statement best characterizes your personal experience with the educational planning process?
Part I. Answer only if you have completed your educational planning contract.
_____ It posed no particular problems, and seemed quite easy.
_____ It was painful to go through, but worthwhile in the end.
_____ It was a lot of work, but not particularly difficult.
_____ It was frustrating, and I'm glad it's over.
_____ Other (please specify) ____________

Part II. Answer only if you have started, but not completed, your educational planning contract.
_____ I am in the middle of educational planning, frustrated, with no end in sight.
_____ I am in the middle and things are going fine.
_____ It is hopeless -- I am thinking of giving up and withdrawing.
_____ Other (please specify) ____________

I. Do you have any suggestions on how the educational planning process might be improved? (Please specify.)
____
____
____
____

Thank You

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APPENDIX B

Table 1
Profile of Mentors Participating in Research Study
(Based on Mentor Responses)

Full-Time/Part-Time Status

Number of full-time mentors		54
Number of part-time mentors:		
Less than 1/4 time	13	
More than 1/4 time but less than 1/2 time	11	
More than 1/2 time	12	26
TOTAL		90

Average Length of Time with Empire State College in Years

Full-time	12
Part-time	6

Average Number of Primary Students

Full-time mentors	34
Part-time mentors	16

Distribution of Participating Mentors by Primary Area of Study

The Arts	3
Business Management and Economics	20
Community and Human Services	16
Cultural Studies	12
Educational Studies	1
Historical Studies	5
Human Development	11
Interdisciplinary	2
Science, Mathematics and Technology	7
Social Theory, Social Structure and Change	6
Unspecified	7
TOTAL	90

Mentor affiliation with center or units

Mentors affiliated with centers primarily	61
Mentors affiliated with units primarily	29
TOTAL	90

Table 2
Profile of Students Participating in Research Study Compared with College-Wide Enrollment Information

(Based on Student Responses and Data Supplied by the
Office of Research and Evalation, Empire State College

	Based on Student Responses	College-Wide Enrollment Information
Full-Time/Part-Time Status		
Percent of full-time mentors	22%	
Percent of part-time students	78%	
TOTAL	100%	
Male/Female Distribution		
Males	32%	37%
Females	68%	63%
Total	100%	100%
Average Age	40	39
Distribution by Primary Area of Study		
The Arts	3.9%	4%
Business Management and Economics	29.1%	31%
Community and Human Services	20.2%	18%
Cultural Studies	4.3%	4%
Educational Studies	9.3%	8.%
Historical Studies	3.6%	1%
Human Development	5.0%	6%
Interdisciplinary	12.4%	13%
Science, Mathematics and Technology	7.4%	10%
Social Theory, Social Structure and Change	3.9%	4%
Unspecified	1.2%	1%
TOTAL	100.0%	100%

Table 3
Profile of Students Participating in Research Study
(Based on Student Responses)

	Percent of Student Responses
Current Degree(s) Pursued	
Associate's degree only	4.2%
Bachelor's degree only	72.7%
Associate's toward Bachelor's degree	23.1%
TOTAL	100.0%
Prior college attendance	
Attended another college or postsecondary institution prior to attending ESC	83.7%
Never attended another college or postsecondary institution	16.3%
TOTAL	100.0%
Average number of credits earned at another college or postsecondary institutions prior to attending ESC	51
Current status of educational planning contract	
Recently started, but not yet completed	13.3%
Completed	76.5%
Not yet begun	10.2%
TOTAL	100.0%

APPENDIX C

Table 4
Summary of Student Ratings of the Usefulness of Selected Resources in the Educational Planning Process Compared with Mentor Predictions of Student Responses

(expressed in percentages)

Resource	Degree of Usefulness VERY HELPFUL Student Responses	 Mentor Predictions of Student Response	SOMEWHAT HELPFUL Student Responses	 Mentor Predictions of Student Response	NOT HELPFUL Student Responses	 Mentor Predictions of Student Responses	DIDN'T USE Student Responses	 Mentor Predictions of Student Responses
Primary mentor	65.6%	92.3%	25.7%	7.7%	7.9%	0.0%	0.9%	0.0%
Other mentors	22.2%	27.8%	33.3%	61.1%	6.0%	2.2%	38.5%	8.9%
Other professionals	19.6%	14.6%	37.4%	70.8%	4.8%	7.9%	38.2%	6.7%
Other students/alumni	10.3%	12.4%	23.2%	51.6%	7.3%	13.4%	59.2%	22.6%
Employer	8.3%	1.1%	18.4%	52.9%	7.9%	25.8%	65.4%	20.2%
Local libraries	34.7%	15.7%	33.3%	67.5%	3.9%	10.1%	28.1%	6.7%
College catalogs	50.9%	28.4%	34.2%	63.6%	4.4%	5.7%	10.5%	2.3%
Portfolio workshop	17.1%	28.1%	26.8%	51.6%	7.0%	3.4%	49.1%	16.9%
Assessment office personnel	14.0%	18.4%	18.4%	52.9%	6.6%	8.0%	61.0%	20.7%
Degree program planning guide	39.9%	24.1%	45.5%	66.7%	4.3%	6.9%	10.3%	2.3%
Friends	7.9%	7.1%	28.6%	54.1%	6.6%	18.8%	56.9%	20.0%

Table 5

Summary of the Importance of Reasons Often Cited for Attending College as Reported by Students at Empire State College Compared with Mentor Predictions of Student Responses

(expressed in percentages)

	Degree of Importance					
	Very Important		Somewhat Important		Not Important	
Reason	Student Responses	Mentor Predictions of Student Responses	Student Responses	Mentor Predictions of Student Responses	Student Responses	Mentor Predictions of Student Responses
To engage in a different career	50.8%	44.9%	23.6%	51.7%	25.6%	3.4%
To obtain a better paying job	52.3%	76.9%	31.3%	20.9%	16.4%	2.0%
To satisfy requirements of present job	21.0%	46.1%	20.6%	40.4%	58.4%	13.5%
To obtain a different job but not necessarily for more pay	22.6%	29.5%	41.2%	60.3%	36.2%	10.2%
To enhance self-esteem	66.4%	42.6%	24.9%	49.5%	8.7%	7.9%
To pursue learning for enjoyment	49.4%	10.1%	35.3%	66.3%	15.3%	23.6%
To complete a life-long goal	70.1%	49.4%	20.1%	41.6%	9.8%	9.0%
To obtain a degree for the sake of getting a degree	24.0%	13.6%	29.2%	45.5%	46.8%	40.9%
Other	10.0%	7.9%	2.5%	2.2%	87.5%	89.9%

Table 6
Summary of the Most Important Reason Cited for Attending College as Reported by Students at Empire State College Compared with Mentor Predictions of Student Responses
(expressed in percentages)

Reason	Student Responses	Mentor Predictions of Student Responses
To engage in a different career	21.3%	10.1%
To obtain a better paying job	13.4%	59.6%
To satisfy requirments of present job	6.2%	4.3%
To obtain a different job but not necessarily for more pay	4.6%	5.6%
To enhance self-esteem	11.6%	3.4%
To pursue learning for enjoyment	7.1%	0.0%
To complete a life-long goal	27.7%	14.6%
To obtain a degree for the sake of getting a degree	4.2%	0.0%
Other	3.9%	2.2%

Table 7
Summary of the Influence of Empire State College's Characteristics Which Contributed to the Student's Decision to Enroll at ESC Rather Than a More Traditional College as Reported by Students at Empire State College Compared with Mentor Predictions of Student Responses

(expressed in percentages)

	Degree of Influence Very Important		Somewhat Important		Not Important	
Reasons	Student Responses	Mentor Predictions of Student Responses	Student Responses	Mentor Predictions of Student Responses	Student Responses	Mentor Predictions of Student Responses
Flexibility as to interdisciplinary degree program requirements	69.9%	41.1%	23.2%	43.3%	6.9%	15.6%
Quality of programs in general	42.6%	13.3%	49.8%	66.7%	7.6%	20.0%
It fits more closely into my time/work schedule	92.5%	100.0%	5.9%	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%
I could obtain a degree in a shorter period of time	37.9%	62.2%	34.6%	31.1%	27.5%	6.7%
I prefer independent study to traditional classes	41.0%	33.3%	34.4%	55.6%	24.6%	11.1%
I thought the work would be easier	3.8%	13.6%	9.3%	38.6%	86.9%	47.8%
I expected to receive credit for experiential learning	34.3%	82.3%	31.8%	17.7%	33.9%	0.0%
Other	7.7%	14.4%	2.0%	2.2%	90.3%	83.4%

Table 8
Summary of the Most Important Characteristics of Empire State College Which Contributed to the Student's Decision to Enroll at ESC Rather Than a More Traditional College as Reported by Students at Empire State College Compared with Mentor Predictions of Student Responses

(expressed in percentages)

Reasons	Students Citing This Reason As Most Important	Mentor Predictions of Student Response to As To Importance
Flexibility as to interdisciplinary degree program requirements	15.6%	6.7%
Quality of programs in general	3.9%	0.0%
It fits more closely into my time/work schedule	57.8%	64.4%
I could obtain a degree in a shorter period of time	5.9%	6.7%
I prefer independent study to traditional classes	7.0%	5.5%
I thought the work would be easier	0.0%	0.0%
I expected to receive credit for experiential learning	7.0%	15.6%
Other	2.8%	1.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Table 9
Comparison of Student Responses to the Question: "Prior to enrollment at ESC, what did you think would be the difficulty level of courses at ESC as compared to a traditional college?
Compared with Mentor Predictions of Student Responses

(expressed in percentages)

Difficulty Level		Student Responses	Mentor Predictions of Student Responses
Easier		3.9%	29.1%
More Difficult		25.3%	15.6%
About the Same		45.9%	31.5%
Didn't Know		24.9%	23.8%
	Total	100.0%	100.0%

Table 10
Comparison of Student Responses to the Question: "If you had previously attended a postsecondary institution, have you found the coursework at ESC to be:" Compared with Mentor Predictions of Student Responses

(expressed in percentages)

Difficulty Level	Student Responses	Mentor Predictions of Student Responses
Easier	7.3%	11.3%
More Difficult	44.9%	52.7%
About the Same	39.2%	27.8%
Didn't Know	8.6%	8.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Table 11
Comparison of Student Responses to the Question: "Which statement best characterizes the way in which you approached planning your degree program?" Compared with Mentor Predictions of Student Responses
(expressed in percentages)

Statement	Student Responses	Mentor Predictions of Student Responses
'My mentor told me what to do, and I did it'	8.7%	19.6%
'I did it 'my way''	8.3%	14.7%
'I had some say but my mentor had the last word'	5.8%	19.5%
'My mentor and I were equal partners throughout the whole effort'	62.3%	41.6%
Other	14.9%	4.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Table 12
Comparison of Student Responses to the Question: "What did you find most difficult about the educational planning process?" Compared with Mentor Predictions of Student Responses

(expressed in percentages)

Statement	Student Responses	Mentor Predictions of Student Responses
'Writing the CBE essay'	10.8%	37.6%
'Deciding what career/concentration to pursue'	13.9%	15.1%
'Writing the rationale'	26.0%	24.5%
'Choosing topics of study for degree program'	26.8%	18.2%
Other	22.5%	4.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Table 13
Comparison of Student Responses to the Question: "Which statement best characterizes your personal experience with the educational planning process (answer only if you have completed your educational planning contract)?" Compared with Mentor Predictions of Student Responses

(expressed in percentages)

Statement	Student Responses	Mentor Predictions of Student Responses
'It posed no particular problems, and seemed quite easy'	15.9%	12.0%
'It was painful to go through, but worthwhile in the end'	11.9%	37.8%
'It was a lot of work, but not particularly difficult'	50.2%	25.0%
'It was frustrating, and I'm glad it's over'	11.0%	23.0%
Other	11.0%	2.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Table 14
Comparison of Student Responses to the Question: "Which statement best characterizes your personal experience with the educational planning process (answer only if you have started, but not completed, your educational planning contract)?" Compared with Mentor Predictions of Student Responses

(expressed in percentages)

Statement	Student Responses	Mentor Predictions of Student Responses
'I am in the middle of educational planning, frustrated, with no end in sight'	20.8%	29.0%
'I am in the middle and things are going fine'	62.5%	48.4%
'It is hopeless--I am thinking of giving up and withdrawing'	12.5%	11.1%
Other	4.2%	11.5%
Total	100.0%	100.0%